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THE ENGLISH VILLAGE

THE ENGLISH VILLAGE

THE ORIGIN AND DECAY OF
ITS COMMUNITY

An Anthropological Interpretation

BY

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PREFACE

THE material contained in the following pages formed the substance of a course of lectures delivered in Newbury in the spring of 1918, at the request of the Newbury Trades and Labour Council. In the first eight chapters an attempt has been made to elucidate the origin of the Village Community by utilising the recent results of anthropological and archæological research. In this the author has found himself in substantial agreement with the suggestions put forward by the late Sir Laurence Gomme.

The next four chapters contain little that is new save the attempt to show that the evolution of the community was a struggle between two racial ideals. The author has accepted the conclusions of Seebohm, Maitland and Vinogradoff, so far as these authorities are in agreement, and where they differ he has usually followed the last named. He has, however, purposely avoided dealing with exceptional cases, and has confined himself, as far as possible to a plain statement of the case as it appears in the south and east of England, especially in Wessex. For obvious reasons local instances alone were cited in these lectures, and the author has decided to let these stand, as there is some advantage in tracing successive stages of development within a single region.

The last portion of the book is an attempt to trace the final struggles of the dying community, and to inquire what hope there may be for a revival of the community spirit in a form more in consonance with modern conditions.

The lectures were repeated in their present form under the auspices of the Sociological Society, at Leplay House in the autumn of 1921.

The Author has to thank Mr. Paul Waterhouse, P.R.I.B.A., for kindly permitting him to reproduce the map of Yattendon which forms Figure IX.

HAROLD PEAKE

March, 1922

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THE ENGLISH VILLAGE

CHAPTER I

THE VILLAGE COMMUNITY

THERE are few acres in the British Isles that have not, at one time or another, been held or cultivated by a village community, or over which such a community has not exercised some rights.¹ These communities have varied from time to time, and from place to place, in their nature and constitution but certain elements are common to all,² while there appears to have been a continuity in their existence and development from their first appearance at the dawn of history to their disappearance in quite recent times.

The existence of such communities is not confined to these islands. We meet with very similar institutions in parts of France, throughout North Germany, in the upper Danube basin and in the plains of Russia. Though all direct signs of their existence in Italy and other parts of south Europe seem to have disappeared, it is not unreasonable to suppose that there, too, such institutions once existed,³ and there are ample evidences that they

¹ It is possible, though by no means certain, that some areas of dense woodland, especially in the Midland counties, were not appropriated to the waste of a village community before they became parts of a royal forest; during the Middle Ages such extra-manorial areas certainly existed.

² The chief features are the common fields, common pastures, common meadow, common waste, and the presence of a lord; but there are times and places when any of these items may be absent. The only consistent feature seems to be the existence of a group of people, related or unrelated in blood, independent or dependent upon a lord, occupying in common certain lands either for tillage or the depasturing of beasts, or both.

³ Seebohm (1890), Ch. viii.

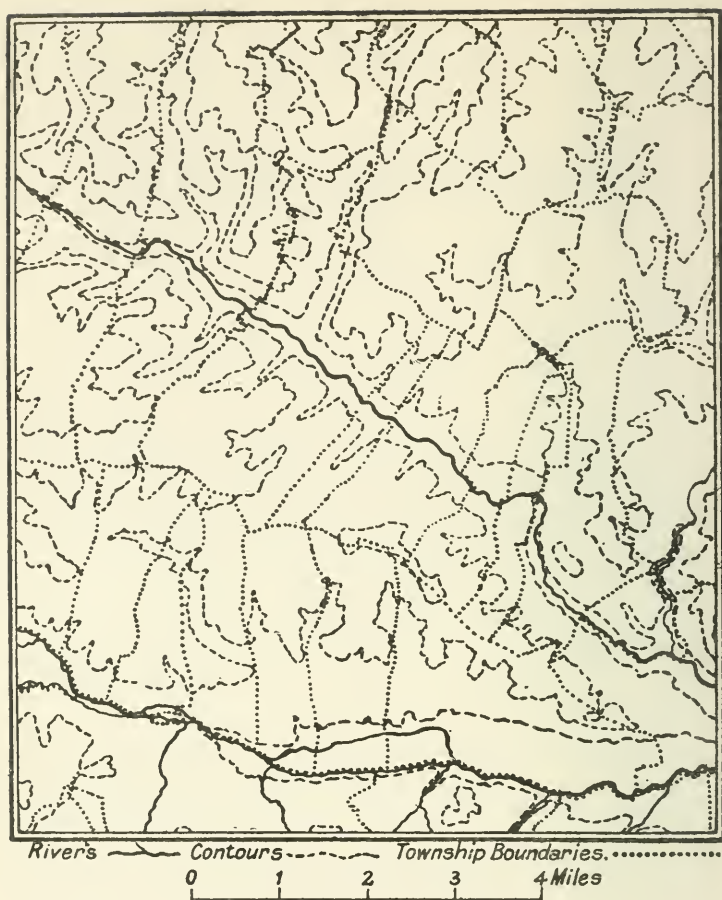


FIGURE I

A GROUP OF TOWNSHIPS

The majority are of the Valley Type; those in the North-East are of the Forest Type.

have existed in China from the earliest times of which we have any knowledge,¹ while they still remain in many parts of India.²

Whether such communities are a necessary stage in the evolution of civilisation, and have arisen independently in all parts of the world, or whether, on the other hand, the idea was conceived in one region and passed on with the knowledge of grain to all other peoples who have reached the agricultural stage, is a question well worthy of investigation, but one which cannot yet be answered with certainty. Both propositions have their advocates,³ but absolute proof is lacking in both cases, and it is not the purpose of these pages to pursue the inquiry. It is sufficient for our purpose to admit that village communities have a wide distribution, that they are varied in type, and that, in this land at least, their form has changed much in the centuries during which it is possible to review them.

In this country alone there are several distinct types of which three stand out conspicuously. These I will term the "Moorland Village," the "Valley Village," and the "Forest Village." It is quite possible that other distinct types occur also, but up to the present investigators have been engaged rather in summarising their resemblances than in marking their differences, in generalising rather than in analysing or classifying. Yet even if we are content with three types we must admit a number of sub-types, or at least exceptional cases, though it is possible that these are modifications due

¹ Johnston (1910), 127-154, where there is a good description of the Chinese Village Community in the Province of Shantung.

² Gomme (1890), pp. 312 and seqq.

³ The principle that under similar conditions the human race would develop similar customs was first advanced by Sir E. B. Tylor in his work "Primitive Culture" (1871), and his views have been advocated by a number of his disciples, among whom one may specially cite Dr. Sidney Hartland. Recently Professor Elliot Smith (1915) and (1917), 47-9, has opposed to this the theory that the existence of two similar cultural features in distant spots invariably indicates that a connection, possibly very indirect, has at one time existed between them, and that no invention has ever occurred independently in more than one area. It is possible, even probable, that the truth lies between these two extremes.

either to special geographical conditions or to the pressure of an intrusive people who have modified the type of village which they found in existence.

The Moorland Village differs markedly in certain respects from the other two ; it appears to depend more upon pastoral than upon agricultural conditions, and in this as in other respects it has a more primitive aspect. It is found, for the most part, in Ireland, Scotland, and Wales, and from this cause it has been argued that it is "Celtic" in origin.¹ This would be a plausible explanation were it certain that the other types had been introduced by the Anglian invaders of the fifth and subsequent centuries. Such a view has been advanced almost with unanimity hitherto,² but I am about to offer evidence which will tend to show that the introduction of one, at least, of the other types must antedate by many centuries the Roman occupation. If my case is sound this disposes of much that has been urged in favour of the Celtic origin of this type. The Moorland Village is, I understand, found also in Devon and other parts of the west of England, and it is at least reasonable to suppose that the mountainous conditions which obtain in the west have influenced its form, or have, at least, conduced to its survival in those regions.

There is much in common between the Valley and the Forest Village, so much so that hitherto they have been considered as of one type. The Valley type is of regular form and has been described very fully by several writers.³ The Forest Village, on the other hand, is more shapeless and, as I hope to show, seems to be of later origin, though curiously enough it was usually the first to disappear. There is one great distinction between them, which will be described later on, and which seems to throw much light on the origin of both types.

¹ Vinogradoff (1905), ch. i.

² But Seebohm (1890), pp. 437 and seqq., advances a view not unlike that submitted in these pages, and a very similar view has been expressed by Gomme (1890), *passim*.

³ The best description is perhaps that of Seebohm (1890), ch. i.

The area in the occupation of a community is known by different names at different times, and in different parts of the country, but the term which is most widely distributed both in space and time is "Township," and this term has also the advantage of not having been used in any other sense. In the following pages, then, the term Township will be used to connote the land of a village community, both in England and elsewhere, while the terms used in other places or times will be given only as synonyms.

In most parts of England, and this is especially true of the south and east, the rivers are old and flow gently to the sea. When unrestrained by artificial embankments they are liable to flood after heavy rain, or when the winter snow is melting, and on these occasions their waters extend for some distance on either side of their normal channels, and deposit over the flooded area a quantity of mud or silt, known as alluvium. By degrees this alluvium reaches a depth of many feet, and extends in a level plain on either side of the stream, often for some miles in width; this is usually termed the flood-plain, the alluvial-plain, or sometimes merely the alluvium. This alluvial plain was an important factor in the economy of the Township, and is the essential feature of the Valley Village.

Though primarily an agricultural community, each village had its flocks and herds. Sheep had been grazed on the English Downs and Welsh Hills since neolithic days,¹ and cattle had been used to draw the plough since ploughs were introduced. Horses were also kept for many purposes, certainly before the arrival of the Roman legions,² though oxen remained in use for ploughing until quite recent times. In the cold, temperate regions it is impossible for such beasts to find

¹ The extent to which neolithic men in Britain had domesticated any animals is uncertain, and will be discussed later (p. 78), but see Holmes (1907), p. 90.

² There is ample evidence that horses were used in Britain in the Early Iron Age; not only have we references to them in Cæsar (Bell. Gall.), but remains of horse-trappings have been found (Arch., xvi. 348; P.S.A., 2nd. Ser., xx. 33, 345).

adequate pasture during the winter months. Horses, it is true, will paw away the snow to reach the grass beneath, but cattle are less accommodating, and if they are to be kept and fed during severe winters, it is necessary to provide food, and this food is usually hay. Now, until grass had been carefully cultivated, no crops worth speaking of could be obtained from the higher ground in the south and east of England, though the conditions differ in the damper climate of the west. Upland hay in the south and east is a feature of recent years, and is often a hazardous crop when the rainfall has been light during the early months of the year. The alluvium alone would bear grass long enough and thick enough to be worth harvesting. With care and irrigation it will produce two crops a year. So the alluvium or water-meadow became an all-important element in the economy of the Township.

Near the alluvium was the village itself, the Tun or Ham or Thorp. It was situated, if possible, on a hard spit of ground, often projecting into the alluvium, either near the stream or one of its tributaries or backwaters, and often near a ford where some highway crossed the river. Those situated by such fords often grew in importance, having benefited by the passing traffic, and were already towns when history first reveals them to us, but where the traffic was mainly of a local nature they have remained to this day merely villages.

We may picture the primitive village as consisting of ten or twelve small houses, rude dwellings, probably of wattle and daub, combining under one roof shelter for man and beast, as well as storage room for the produce of the soil. Near the village were a few small closes in which the plough oxen could be penned at night during the ploughing season, and perhaps a saddle-horse or two would be kept, and in favoured areas there were perhaps, as time grew on, small patches for the cultivation of vegetables and a few small orchards. The village must have been small and humble in its origin,

though doubtless it grew larger and more complex as cultivation advanced; many rural villages have not advanced far beyond this stage to-day. In Saxon times the village seems to have been surrounded by a fence, or hedge, hence the name *tun* or *ton*, the predecessor of our modern *town*, which is said to be derived from the Saxon *tynan*, to hedge.

Beyond the village were large arable fields, which were held in common by the men of the Township, and beyond these again was the waste, either heath, down or wood, as the case might be, which extended till it met the waste of the next township. The woodland was valuable in many ways. The trees provided material for house-building, for fencing, and for making carts and ploughs, the toppings and underwood were valuable for fuel, while the acorns and mast of the oak and beech woods provided "pannage" for the pigs which were allowed to roam here in charge of the village swine-herd. The heath and grassy downs provided pasturage for sheep and cattle. Thus Townships varied in their possessions; some were rich in timber and so early became famous for carpentry and the making of furniture, while others with extensive down-lands possessed great flocks of sheep, and turned their attention mainly to spinning and the weaving of woollen fabrics.

But the most distinctive feature of the Township, alike in this as in other countries, was the arable fields, the number of which varied in different townships and at different times. These were cultivated in common by the men of the Township according to certain well defined rules and regulations, which have been closely studied by many investigators.¹

Each field was divided into a number of long, narrow strips, calculated to be a day's work for one plough. Such strips normally measured an acre, though they varied considerably in size in different parts of the country,

¹ See Vinogradoff (1905), (1908), (1892), and other works; Maitland (1897), (1898); Slater (1907); Gomme (1890); and Gonner.

owing to variations in the quality of the soil, or the amount of work expected daily from a plough-team. The strip, in any case, measured an acre, but acres were of different sizes in different regions. The normal acre was a furlong, i.e., a furrow long in length, and four poles in width. These dimensions, as we have seen, varied, and it is by no means clear on what they were based. Between each acre a narrow strip, about a foot or two wide, was left unploughed, to keep the acres distinct. Such strips were termed *balks*, and served as paths to give access to the acres. By degrees the fields were extended as more arable land was needed, and it was not always possible for such extensions to keep the rectangular form, or to adhere accurately to the acre dimension. So at the outskirts of the fields we often meet with "half-acres," or triangular patches known as "gored pieces," and sometimes patches, probably left uncultivated, and known as "no-man's land," a term which of late has received a more sinister meaning.

Though in recent times the number of fields in each township has varied considerably, there is ample evidence to show that in early days they were more uniform. In a large number of townships the number was three, that is to say the three-field system was in vogue, and with it a three-coursed system of husbandry, namely winter corn, spring corn, and fallow. In some cases, however, we have evidence of a two-field system, consisting of an "in-field," and an "out-field," and there is reason for believing that this has grown out of a one-field system, instances of the survival of which into recent times can be found.¹

We have thus two distinct systems of arable fields, a three-field system and a one-field system, though the latter has usually developed into a two-field system. As far as I have been able to test it, in the Valley Townships, where alluvial meadows exist, the three-field system was invariably in force. On the other hand, in

¹ Slater (1912), (1907), 71, 76, 77, 179.

those townships in which there is no alluvium, or it is of insignificant quantity, I have sometimes found a one-field or two-field system in use, but the evidence of this is very scanty, as the majority of such townships lost their community existence at an early date. This is a question that needs further investigation ; but, from the evidence available, I am inclined to believe that the Valley Village, with its alluvial meadow and three-field system, is the older, while the Forest Village, with its lack of alluvium and one-field system, is a later form, introduced when all the alluvial lands had already been settled.

The most striking feature in connection with these arable fields was that the lands were held in common by the men of the Township. The ploughing, sowing and harvesting of each strip was done by the community, each man undertaking his appointed task, but the crops were divided among the households, each man taking the produce of the acres allotted to him. That an equal number of acres was allotted to each in early times has been placed beyond doubt,¹ and it has further been noted that the acres of each man did not lie contiguous to one another, but were interspersed among those of his neighbours ; further, there is evidence that these acres were allotted in order. Thus, after A's acre would come B's, then C's, and so on, and after each had had an acre A would have another, and so on. This has been thought to indicate that at one time the acres were allotted fresh each year,² and that each year each man moved on one place, like the guests at the Mad Hatter's tea-party, a system which has remained in use in the Outer Hebrides to our own day.³

What then was the reason for this somewhat strange arrangement ? Only one answer is possible. The system was devised to promote equality among the men of the Township. By taking the strips in rotation the good

¹ Seebohm (1890), *passim*, and 413.

² *Ibid*, 113-7.

³ Slater (1907), 166, 174.

land and the poor land were shared alike, by harvesting in the same order the good and bad weather fell equally to all, while by changing the strips yearly bad cultivation was discouraged, for the misused strips would sooner or later become the share of the misuser. A similar arrangement was made in the allotment of shares in the meadow, and after hay harvest the barriers were thrown down and the cattle of the community grazed on the aftermath, as they did on the stubble after the corn harvest.

Thus all the arrangements both in common-field and meadow were carefully designed to promote exact equality among the men of the Township, and yet from the earliest time of which we have any historic record we find the presence of one who took no part in the agricultural operations of the community, yet expected his share in the produce, and that not only an equal share, but the lion's portion. He is known by different names under different circumstances, but we will call him the "Lord," for by that designation he was more often known. He held a number of acres, sometimes interspersed with those of the peasants, sometimes in a block by themselves, which were called his demesne. These were cultivated for him by the peasants under conditions which varied from time to time. He held also a share in the meadow, as well as an ever-increasing interest on the waste. Lastly, he owned the mill, to which the others brought their grist, a certain proportion of which was put into the lord's coffer as payment for grinding. Yet the lord had his service to perform to the community, though it was in no way menial or agricultural. It was his duty to act as their military chief in time of war and as their magistrate or judge in time of peace. This appears to have been his sole contribution to the economy of the community.

Thus we have in our village community, and the same is true for other parts of Europe whence evidence is available, a curiously contradictory state of affairs. On

the one hand we have a band of peasants, cultivating the soil in common, under terms designed to promote absolute equality of profits, while superimposed on them there is the lord, rendering no agricultural service, yet claiming a large share of the proceeds, and living parasitically upon the work of the peasants, over whom he acts as judge and military chief.

This curious state of things has puzzled all investigators and the causes which enabled the lord to impose himself upon the peasantry have not yet been discovered. Maitland,¹ it is true, endeavoured to find an explanation, postulating a free village during Saxon times and the rise of the lord under the later Saxon kings, a system completed by the Norman conquest. It seems, however, that the evidence he relied upon is exceptional and relates only to a few townships in the east of England, and that the free peasants he refers to were either a band of minor lords, of Danish extraction, who jointly held the peasantry enthralled, or else a band of Danish peasants who had ousted the Saxons, peasantry and lord alike.² The lord of this country is far older than the coming of the Vikings. The laws of Ine make it clear that he was a well-established institution in 688, while the laws of Ethelbert seem to imply his existence between 597 and 616.³ The lord, in fact, is as old as any of our historical documents.

If we are to solve the problem of the origin of the lord in the English Village we must have recourse not only to history but to other sciences, to the evidence provided by Anthropology and pre-historic Archæology. We shall find reason to believe that the lord is an old institution in Europe, and it will be the object of the following pages to trace back into the dim past the origin of this custom.

¹ Maitland (1897), 129, 339, 352.

² The whole question of the status of sokemen in the eastern counties is very obscure, but as this type is found only in those areas that had come under Danish influence, we seem scarcely justified in considering them as survivals of a primitive free community; but on this subject see Vinogradoff (1905), pp. 332-365.

³ Seebohm (1890), 173-5.

CHAPTER II

PROGRESSIVE STAGES OF CULTURE

ANTHROPOLOGISTS have been wont to tell us that all civilised peoples have passed through three stages of culture, which they term the Hunting, the Pastoral and the Agricultural, while many backward tribes are still to be found in one or other of the first two. In recent years, however, this opinion has been to some extent modified, and while admitting that all have begun with hunting wild animals for food, the two other stages have grown up simultaneously, and have been dependent upon geographical conditions.

Professor J. L. Myres¹ has pointed out that where rainfall is heavy, dense forest conditions prevail, and as the rainfall lessens the forest opens out into glades, and passes through the stages of parkland, scrub, to grassy steppes, and ultimately, as the rainfall ceases to the arid desert. In these open lands man is unable to obtain a living by the chase alone, for there is no cover behind which to stalk his quarry, while the beasts of the steppe and desert are fleet of foot then he. Hence he has domesticated some of the beasts he has found in these regions, has lived upon their milk and flesh, and has used some, such as the ass, the camel and the horse, to supply the speed which he himself lacks. Thus some attained the Pastoral stage of life.

In the forest, on the other hand, hunting is profitable, for it abounds in life of many kinds, including animals easily captured or killed by cunning. But hunting is the occupation of the man, and while he is engaged upon the chase the woman makes a home for her babies and in

¹ Myres, "The Dawn of History," ch. i.

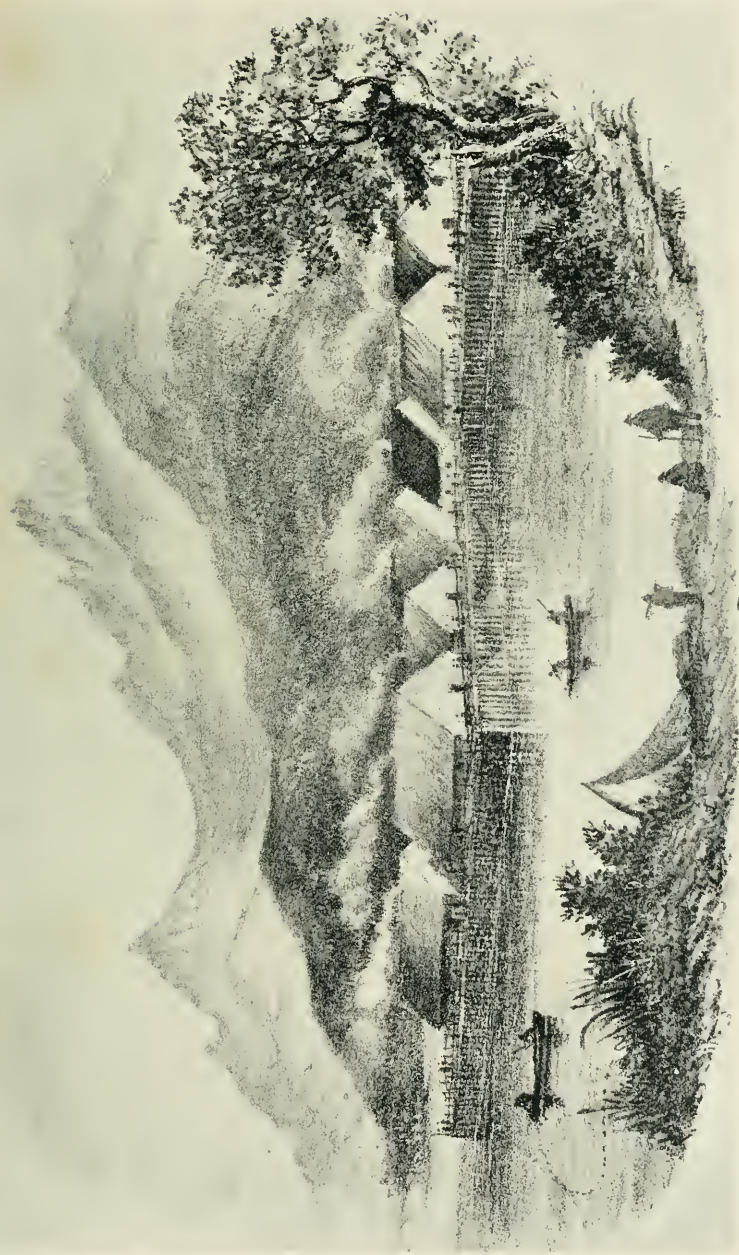


FIGURE II
VIEW OF A SWISS LAKE VILLAGE



her leisure moments sows a few seeds and lays the foundation of agriculture. It is true that in the dense forest such efforts cannot have any far-reaching effect for it is hard work to fight the jungle, and so forest tribes have usually remained mainly dependent on the chase. But it is in the forest that the first germ of agriculture arose, and thence it was carried to the parklands, and it developed first on the lands between the forest and the steppe, though it did not reach an advanced state until it had been carried to rich alluvial valleys.

Such is the newer view of anthropologists on the early rise of civilisation, and it has received, in recent years, unexpected support from the discoveries of Mr. R. Pumpelly, in Turkestan.¹ At Anau, to the south-east of the Caspian Sea, he explored the successive deposits of a village, which he believed was founded before 8,000 B.C. His dates may be open to criticism, but the evidence is clear that during the first centuries of the village's existence, the inhabitants were agriculturists, and cultivated wheat and barley. At first they had no domesticated animals, though they hunted wild oxen, sheep and other animals of the adjoining steppe. It was not until the settlement had been in existence for some centuries that by degrees they domesticated the ox the pig and the horse, and successively two breeds of sheep.

Thus arose independently the pastoral and agricultural modes of life, and had the two kept always distinct, it is unlikely that civilisation would have advanced very far. But, as we shall see, circumstances have brought the two cultures into frequent contact and conflict, and out of the mingling of the two ideals have evolved the higher stages of civilisation.

Hunting people vary considerably in the extent of their civilisation, but may for practical purposes be divided into two types.² The first, called the Lower Hunters, live mainly by gathering wild fruits and roots, and by

¹ Pumpelly (1908), i. 32 and seqq.

² Hobhouse, 203 and seqq., 332 and seqq.

hunting wild animals, including reptiles and vermin. These, as a rule, have no permanent dwellings, but erect wind-breaks, live in caves, or build temporary huts of boughs. They live in very small communities containing one or at the most two families, and have little or no social organisation.

The Higher Hunters, on the other hand, gain part of their livelihood by fishing; they have as a rule more settled habitations, though some are, from the nature of their quarry, nomadic or semi-nomadic. Their implements and other material possessions show a great advance on those of the Lower Hunters, and they frequently live in fair-sized villages, with some definite form of government. The vast majority of the Higher Hunters at the present day live on the American Continents, and in many cases show signs of an incipient pastoral or agricultural condition.

There is, however, one great distinction between the Hunters and the other groups. They do nothing to produce wealth, living, as they do, by exploiting the natural resources of their country. As these resources are limited, the lands they inhabit can never support any but the scantiest population. They are never constructive, but live by destroying natural products, and thus they cannot be said to have reached a true economic existence.

Perry¹ has recently maintained that it may be said in their favour that they are invariably peaceful and that wars did not occur until men had reached the pastoral stage. But in spite of much ingenious argument the facts, I fear, are against him, for the American hunting tribes made war a business, while inter-tribal warfare has constantly decimated the ranks of the Australian aborigines. It may be argued with some truth that wars result usually from coveting one's neighbour's wealth, and if there is no wealth there is nothing to covet, but against this it may be urged that hunting grounds

¹Perry (1917).

contain potential wealth, and it was for these that the Indians of the American plains most frequently went to war. If, as is perhaps true, war on a large scale is rare among hunting peoples, this is due not so much to the inherent peacefulness of the hunter's disposition, as to the fact that the communities are too poorly organised, especially as regards their commissariat, to permit of wars being either extensive or prolonged.

While some of the Hunters began to cultivate small clear patches on the outskirts of the forests, those who had wandered further afield towards the grassy steppes began to domesticate some of the wild animals they found there. How and why this was effected is uncertain, but it seems likely that the women saved the young of the beasts their husbands slew for food, hoping thereby in time to obtain an ample supply of milk for their babies. The suggestion made by Hahn¹ and quoted with approval by Peisker,² that domestication was effected for religious ends, seems to have little to support it, and appears on the face of it to be improbable.

The animals thus domesticated were then driven from the outliers of the forest, where they might easily escape or be lost, or perchance fall victims to some carnivorous beast, out into the open grassy steppes, and here they were herded and tended and suffered to increase and multiply. Thus the wealth of the pastoral peoples increased without much effort on their part, the milk of the cattle reduced infant mortality and lessened the drain upon the mother. The cattle could be watched, and driven too, by quite small children, the growing daughters could become the milkmaids, the mother had ample leisure to attend to the household, so it is small wonder that the pastoral tribes increased rapidly in numbers and wealth, while the men lived lives of almost unbroken idleness, with no other occupation than to guide the wanderings

¹ Hahn (E.), *Haustiere*, 26 and seqq., *Alter*, 91 and seqq., *Entstehung*, 57 and seqq., 93.

² Peisker, 330, 1.

of the tribe and govern the actions of their women and children.¹

There seems to be a tendency among pastoral peoples to cling together, for the sons to remain in the father's camp, and for this to continue for many generations; only when the family and the herd became too large for convenient management was it usual to divide. The head of the tribe became usually an autocrat, even if a benign one, and at his death his rule was passed on to his eldest son, though the younger brothers often gave him advice on critical occasions, thus developing gradually into a Council of Elders.

We find an admirable picture of this pastoral life in the account in Genesis of Abraham and the other patriarchs, and such life still exists among nomad tribes in Mongolia and Turkestan, in Arabia, and in the northern and eastern parts of the African Continent.

Thus a pastoral life tended to beget a nomadic habit, with a consequent disregard of house or home, or such material comforts as are impossible without a settled abode. It led to a love of an open-air life, with the consequent increase to health and activity. It necessitated a diet consisting mainly of meat, milk and cheese, and the idle existence of the men often induced a contemplative life, much addicted to astronomy, poetry and religious thought, or else to a life devoted to hunting, racing and active sports. The government was invariably tribal and patriarchal, and the law of primogeniture, the birth-right of the first-born, seems to have existed from the beginning,² and in early days we see the

¹ Compare Marco Polo's description of the Tartars (I., li.): "The women do the buying and selling, and whatever is necessary to provide for the husband and household; for the men all lead the life of gentlemen, troubling themselves about nothing but hunting and hawking, and looking after their goshawks and falcons, unless it be the practice of warlike exercises." Yule (1903), i. 252.

² We find in most countries two opposing systems of descent, the succession of the eldest and the succession of the youngest. Everything seems to point to the fact that among steppe-peoples primogeniture has always existed, and the inference is that ultimogeniture has arisen among settled agriculturists. The story of Esau and Jacob seem to show that among the children of Isaac there existed the tradition of both customs, just as the fact that one was hairy and the other smooth seems to hint that we are dealing with a family of mixed racial ancestry.

autocratic power of the tribal chief somewhat limited by a Council of Elders.

The taming of the ass, the camel, and most of all the horse, gave extreme mobility to the tribe, their nomadic habits in search of fresh pastures was a lesson in strategy, while the practice of driving large herds of cattle or flocks of sheep was a study in tactics. Thus the tribe was, without knowing it, fitting itself for war, and when the grazing grounds were becoming all too small for the beasts that required feeding, and it was necessary to acquire fresh pastures or perish, the opportunity occurred of putting this training to the test.

Although pastoral peoples differ in many particulars, due mainly to the geographical conditions of their feeding grounds, the characteristics that have been enumerated above are found among them all, and have survived in no small measure among those who have abandoned the pastoral career for many generations. The best known pastoral peoples at the present day are the Mongol and Mongoloid peoples of the high Asiatic steppes, the Semitic tribes in Arabia, and the Hamite and half-Hamite tribes of East Africa. We have evidence, too, that a tall, long-headed and probably fair-haired people were living a pastoral life on the Russian steppes in neolithic days,¹ and it cannot be an accidental coincidence that the rulers in the old world, since the dawn of history, have, with few exceptions, been drawn from the ranks of one or other of these four great pastoral peoples.

Agriculture was first practised, as we have seen, on the outskirts of the forest, where the trees are beginning to thin out, leaving open glades, and thence it passed to the more open park lands beyond. The origin of the cultivation of cereals is lost in the dim past; wheat, barley and millet were cultivated in neolithic days, oats and rye as early as the Bronze Age. It has even been claimed that grain was grown in palæolithic times, but this view is not generally accepted. Wheat is believed

¹ Peake (1916), 163; see also Minns, 142-5.

to have grown wild in Mesopotamia, Syria, the Crimea, and east of the Caucasus mountains, and what is believed to be a survival of its ancestral form has in recent years been found in the Lebanon;¹ barley is found wild near the Caucasus and in Persia, while oats are similarly found in the Caspio-Caucasian plain.² As we have seen, the two former were cultivated at a very early period at Anau, just north of the wooded mountains of the Kopet Dag, which divides Persia from the Caspian, and it seems probable that they were grown in Mesopotamia at almost if not quite as early a date, while the introduction into Egypt of barley dates from early pre-dynastic times, when the dwellers by the Nile used also a millet, a cultivated form of *Panicum colonum*, which grows wild in North Africa.³

It is believed that about the same time these grains were cultivated in the Armenian highlands, in fact it is possible that it was here that their use by man was first begun. Thence it seems probable they were carried across Asia Minor and the Bosphorus, and up the Danube Valley into Central Europe, for long before the close of the neolithic age both grains were cultivated by the lake-dwellers of Switzerland and the adjoining Alpine region.⁴

To grow grain, even in comparatively small quantities, in or near a forest is arduous work, for land suitable for cultivation is also suitable for forest trees; the timber would need clearing as the patches of cultivation increased, and constant effort would be needed to prevent the woodland from invading the cultivated ground.

Not only is the forest itself a constant menace, but its wild inhabitants are still more dangerous. The dense woods were inhabited by bears and wolves, perhaps by

¹ B.P.I.B. 274; Stapf (1910).

² The whole question is discussed fully by Obermaier (1912), i. 439-464; see also Hoop (1905).

³ Elliot-Smith (1911), 42.

⁴ Keller (1866), 48, 62, 63, 337.

more formidable beasts, and all these dangers would cause the early agriculturists to huddle together in villages for mutual protection and for organised effort against the invading woodland. With hoes and suchlike simple implements of husbandry it was a strenuous task to provide sufficient food for the community, and as children were of no great assistance in raising grain, there would be no keen desire to see their numbers multiplied unnecessarily.

These and other causes led the first agriculturists to lead a communal existence in closely built and well-defended villages, often built on a marsh or on piles in the shallow waters of a lake. This intimate association naturally led to co-operation in their arduous work, and often to communal possession of their houses and household goods, sometimes, too, if we may trust early writers, to communal marriages,¹ as is still sometimes the custom in the mountain villages in the Tibetan region.

Thus we may picture the first agriculturists in Central Europe, living in their pile-dwellings in the shallow margin of the Alpine lakes, with the drawbridge up so that no invading tribe or forest beast can attack them unawares. By the lake's shore, between the water and the forest, they tilled in common their common fields of grain, while they pastured their common flocks and herds on the open Alps above, and in rare moments of leisure increased their food supply by hunting the wild boars that infested the marshes. Their communal spirit, and perhaps communal marriages, led them to be no respecters of lineage, and to disdain vain genealogies. They became democratic in every sense of the term, managing everything in committee, with due form and ceremony, electing a chairman to keep order, or perhaps a Mayor, to rule in the name of the community for an annual period.

Thus they became interdependent, co-operative in their undertakings, communal in their ideals. They

¹ According to Kovalevsky (1891), Cosmas of Prague, writing in the eleventh century of the Bohemians or Czechs, says that "their marriages were communal."

preferred to decide disputes rather by argument and by the vote than by recourse to force. They tended to become timid and averse to fighting, though the strong attachment to their home, the result of a settled existence, would fire them to defend it with the courage of a mother protecting her babe should an enemy venture to attack it. Nevertheless their tendency would be rather to fight behind a wall, a ditch, or other protection, than to seek the issue in more open warfare.¹

¹ Ripley (1900), 449, 450; Collignon (1895), p. 125; Lapouge (1896), p. 407.

CHAPTER III

THE EARLY HISTORY OF EUROPE AND THE MEANING OF " RACE "

IT is clear that we must seek the origins of the Village Community in the far distant past. A communal system, based largely upon the cultivation in common of arable fields, must date from the time when grain was first cultivated, and this began in Europe early in the neolithic age. First, however, it may be well to review, in outline at least, what is known of the early history of mankind in Europe.

It was during the Pleistocene epoch, the period of the Ice Ages, when the climate oscillated from extreme arctic cold to a degree of warmth that was almost if not quite sub-tropical, that man first appeared upon the scene in Europe. It is true that flints have been found, which are claimed to be of human workmanship, and which from their position appear to date from a still earlier time. But it is to the second and still more to the third inter-glacial period that we must relegate the first certain evidence of the presence of man in Europe.

The earliest archæologists recognised, as did certain writers in antiquity,¹ that man had passed through several stages of culture, which could best be described in terms of the materials used for cutting implements, so they divided the human epoch into three Ages, those of stone, bronze and iron. Later it was recognised that stone implements varied considerably in type and workmanship, and in the conditions under which they had been found. The stone age was therefore divided into two, the older stone, or Palæolithic Age, and the newer stone

¹ Hesiod, I. 50; Lucretius, v. 1282; Eccard (1750); Goguet (1758)

or Neolithic Age.¹ Further investigations into the remains of the Palæolithic Age, especially in France, showed that seven successive cultures could be discerned, each with its special types of implements, and in more recent times claims have been made for several still earlier cultures.² Disregarding the latter, on which no general agreement has yet been reached, we find that the seven palæolithic cultures generally recognised may readily be divided into two groups, and that the second group has, in some respects, closer relations to the neolithic age than it has to the preceding cultures. It has, therefore, been suggested recently that human history should be divided into two great epochs or phases, the Palæanthropic, including the first three cultures of the palæolithic age, Chellean, Acheulean, and Mousterian, together with such earlier cultures as may in the future be proved to have existed, while the last four palæolithic cultures, Aurignacian, Solutrean, Magdalenian and Azilian, with all subsequent cultures, whether of stone or metal, should be considered as belonging to the Neanthropic phase.³ The fourth Ice Age, the Würm, as it is called, marks the division between the two, and the retreat of the last great arctic ice-cap became definite, with some subsequent set-backs, with the opening of the neanthropic epoch.

Of palæanthropic man we know little at present. We have numerous flint implements of his manufacture, which are heavy and rough, though very skilfully fashioned. We have a number of skeletons, dating from the last of these cultures, which show us a type of man, the Neanderthal type, very different from the men of to-day. A little evidence has been produced to show that towards the close of this epoch he made rough pottery,⁴ but this is not generally accepted, and of his home life and his

¹ Lubbock (1865), 2, 3.

² Notably by J. Reid Moir, for the rostro-carinate implements found beneath the Red Crag, near Ipswich. Cf. Moir (1916), 197 and seqq.; and (1920).

³ Elliot-Smith (1916), 325; (1917), 18.

⁴ Moir (1917), 407 and seqq.

institutions we know nothing, though we may infer that his state of civilisation was no more advanced than that of the Lower Hunters of to-day.

Of the palæolithic culture of the neanthropic epoch we know much more. During this time the climate was still in a state of oscillation, but the cold periods only produced a considerable extension of the glaciers and snow fields in the Alps and other mountain regions, while in the intervening periods the condition of North Europe varied from tundra, such as prevails to-day in Northern Siberia, to grassy steppe lands and temperate forests. Numerous skeletons of this period have been found, most of them differing little from those of modern times. A careful study of these has been made by Professor Fleure,¹ which should enable us to form some idea of their relationship to the people that we meet with later.

But it is the art of these people which is their most striking characteristic. Not only are their knife-handles, harpoons and other weapons ornamented with most lifelike representations of the animals they hunted, but in the caves that they occupied we find representations of bisons and reindeer, sometimes carved, more often painted in colour, showing an artistic skill and technique which is quite amazing.²

It has been suggested that towards the close of this period grain was cultivated, and in support of this it has been pointed out that certain fragments of wood and slate have been found in the caves of les Espelungues, Bruniquel, and Lorthet, which are ornamented with plant designs.³ It would be hazardous, however, to assert that such designs represent wheat or any other grain-bearing plant, and, as Déchelette has pointed out,⁴ they may well be representations of wild plants used

¹ Fleure (1920), 12-40.

² Osborne (1918) and Parkyn (1915).

³ Piette (1896), 410 and seqq.

⁴ Déchelette (1908), i. 228-232.

for food. On the whole, therefore, evidence is lacking that late palæolithic man had advanced to the agricultural stage.

In the matter of the domestication of animals it is different. The question has been fiercely debated, and as yet no general agreement has been reached. There is much to support the view that the men of Solutr  had tamed the horse, though doubtless they hunted those that they found wild, and used them for food. That the dwellers in the Aurignacian and Magdalenian caves kept bison, and probably reindeer too, in a state of domestication, is at least possible, and Sir C. Hercules Read has recently given it as his well-considered opinion "that no body of artists, however capable, could have produced the frescoes of Altamira and the engravings of the Dordogne without having enjoyed the study of animals at rest and in confinement."¹ Thus pal olithic man of the neanthropic epoch has progressed as far as the stage of the Higher Hunter, and was developing, if he had not already developed, into the pastoral stage, though, in Europe at least, he had, it would seem, made no experiments in agriculture.

The neolithic age is characterised by the use of more finely chipped flint implements, often ground and polished, by the presence of pottery and by more settled modes of life. It is believed to have begun about eight to nine thousand years ago, and to have lasted until the introduction of metal, which took place at different times in different places. It has been divided into three sections, the Campignian, the Robenhausian and the Carnac,² but during the last of these metal was appearing in some places. In most parts of Europe, if not in all, man had passed entirely from the hunting stage, but to what extent he was in the pastoral or agricultural stage or both, is a question that needs fuller inquiry.

¹ Read (1918), 15. This view has not received general acceptance.

² Smith, R.A. (1911), 96.

When we discuss different peoples at the present day we usually speak of them in terms of nationality, and call them, as the case may be, British, French, Italians or Germans, and when dealing with those of the ancient world we define them as Romans, Greeks, Egyptians, and so forth. But when we are considering more remote ages such national terms do not help us, for nations, as we now understand them, had not evolved, or if they had we have no means of knowing anything about them. It is difficult, however, to generalise about people if we have no terms in which to describe the various sections. As national terms will not help us we must turn to something else. Some writers have used ancient tribal names, such as Iberians, Ligurians, and the like, but we are at present too uncertain what these terms connote, or what was their exact significance to the classical writers who used them. In the nineteenth century, when scholars were under the spell of the German comparative philologists, the Aryan hypothesis dominated their thoughts, and all writers spoke of tribes as being Celts, Teutons, Slavs, and so on. During the time of the Roman Empire these terms may have had some definite and exact significance, though even that is doubtful, for were a Teutonic tribe to conquer the territory of certain Celts and impose upon them their language, the land in question would be spoken of by subsequent writers as occupied by Teutons, though the majority of its inhabitants might in reality be Celts, more or less Teutonised as the case might be. It is now recognised that such terms are accurate only for distinguishing languages and dialects, and that as a description of people in prehistoric times they are not only inadequate and inexact, but decidedly misleading.

What then must be done, if we are not to use terms of nationality, of tribal organisation or of language? How can we distinguish between the peoples occupying different areas? The answer of the anthropologist is clear, we must speak of people in terms of Race.

The term *race* is one that is constantly used very loosely. We find people talking, and writing too, of the British Race and the French Race, the expression "The Latin Races," is beloved by journalists, who are also addicted to such expressions as the Celtic Race, the Teutonic Race, and such like. Yet the term *race* has an accurate meaning, which has been clearly defined time after time, though this definition is too often ignored. It will not, then, be without value to discuss the question again.

We all know what we mean by the different races, or as we more often call them, breeds, of horses, cattle, sheep and dogs. We can distinguish between a greyhound and a pug, a shire horse and a forest pony, and in cattle between a short-horn and a polled Angus. Breeds of men are called races, and the members of each race resemble one another in certain definite characteristics, and in these usually differ from members of other races. That certain mental characters are present or absent in each race is probable, but less certain, for some such characters may be the result of environment rather than of heredity, and may be common to the members of one nation or the inhabitants of a certain region, rather than be shared alike by all members of one race wherever they may happen to dwell. Still we find certain fundamental mental traits appearing in different lands and at different times, under circumstances that lead us to believe that they are racial in origin, though this does not preclude us from believing that they are ultimately due to environment, but to an environment which existed for all members of the race in that far distant past, before there had occurred that mingling of races which has been characteristic of those few centuries about which we have documentary historical evidence.

The chief physical characters are Stature, in which is included height, breadth, corpulency, and bodily proportions in general; Pigmentation, which includes the colour of the eyes and hair, as well as the type of complexion; and the form of the head, which is

particularly valuable in comparing the people of the present with those of the long past, whose skeletons are laid bare by our excavations. Of less moment, but still valuable, are certain other characters such as the shape of the nose, the form of the orbits of the eyes, and the nature of the hair.

We all recognise that individuals vary considerably in height, breadth of shoulder, robustness and tendency to corpulency, and extended observations show that these features usually accompany other physical traits. Most people would agree that in this country fair-haired people are usually taller than dark-haired, though many exceptions to this rule could be cited. It is also noticeable that a certain darker type is "stocky" in its build, and tends to corpulency in middle life, while in the west, especially in Wales, we are familiar with a slight-built and rather short type with very dark hair and complexion. A large series of measurements taken in many lands tends to prove that different races have each their normal measurements in height, breadth, and other bodily proportions, that these are true of the mass, if not of every individual, and that where there has been the least racial admixture, there will be found the least variation in stature. Two causes seem to lead to more numerous exceptions to this rule; one, already stated, is that where much admixture has occurred many individuals may resemble one race as regards stature, and another race as regards colouration, but the other cause is also important and merits closer attention.

There are certain areas where, owing to the poverty of the soil, the poor quality of the water supply or the presence of some endemic disease such as malaria, the stature of the population is found to be considerably lower than in the surrounding regions; such areas are known as "misery spots." One such area, the Limousin hills, south of Limoges, lying between the basins of the Garonne and the Loire, has been most carefully investigated by the French anthropologists and in particular

by M. Collignon.¹ Here the men are found to be seldom more than five feet two inches in height, while ten per cent. do not reach a height of four feet eleven inches, and the women are shorter still by some inches. That this shortness of stature is not due to racial peculiarities has been proved, for the people are of various types, and the fair long-headed type, usually the tallest, is present in considerable numbers. The soil is peculiarly barren, the water bad, and the people live largely upon chestnuts, and there seems to be no doubt that the lowness of stature is due to geographic or economic rather than to racial causes. This is further proved by the fact that children born here, but brought up elsewhere, attain a normal height, while those born elsewhere, but brought up in the "misery spot," are correspondingly dwarfed. The problem has, I believe, received attention from the French Government, steps have been taken to improve the condition of the people, and I understand that recent statistics show that the stature in this area has been improving.² Apart from definite misery spots, there is evidence to show that individuals brought up in healthy surroundings, with ample food, fresh air, and healthful exercise, are taller than those who have been denied these advantages in their youth, and that this is quite irrespective of racial inheritance.³ On the other hand all evidence seems to point to the fact that while favourable conditions will increase the stature of members of a race habitually small, it will not convert them into a really tall race. Stature, then, is primarily a question of racial inheritance, though it is very susceptible to the influence of environment.

Pigmentation, or the colour of the eyes, hair and skin, is decidedly a racial character, and is so noticeable that the first classifications of mankind were made upon this feature alone. Even now many people divide the

¹ Collignon (1894), fasc. 3, 26, and seqq.

² B.S.A.P., Ser. 6, IV., fasc. iii.-iv. (1913), 392.

³ Ripley (1900), 80, 89, 91-5, 554.

population of the world into white, yellow, red and black races, a generalisation which is very far from being correct. Fair hair and dark hair are certainly signs of race, but intermediate shades probably indicate admixture. Red hair is popularly supposed to occur among the offspring of dark and light-haired parents, and it is probable that in this respect popular opinion is correct.¹ It is not so clear to what extent the pigmentation of the iris may always be considered a safe guide. Fair hair seems with some exceptions to be accompanied by grey or blue eyes, but it is not uncommon to find blue eyes also with all the other characteristics of a brunette race. It is possible that a certain type of blue eye may be a normal character of this dark-haired race, but on the other hand it may be that the pale iris is a very dominant characteristic of the fair-haired type, and may persist where a slight admixture has taken place, and when all the other characters of this type have disappeared. The colour of the skin is more difficult to describe, and here popular opinion has perhaps tended to mask the truth. The people of Europe have for centuries been considered as white folk, in contradistinction to the people of other continents. As a matter of fact the complexions of Europeans vary enormously, and it is not easy to distinguish between that of a man from south Europe and one from north Africa. There are probably three or four distinct types of complexion among the peoples of Europe, besides many intermediate varieties due to racial admixture.

The shape of the head, especially of the skull, is one of the most valuable signs of race, and is particularly useful to us as we can in this case compare the evidence gained from the examination of the modern population with that obtained from the graves of antiquity. The great majority of anthropologists, including all who have any claim to be anatomists, believe that this is one of the most permanent of the physical characters, and is less than any other liable to modification from change of environment,

¹ Fleure and James (1916), 118.

though there exists a small school of thought who, on the contrary, believe that the form changes rapidly in response to changes in diet or other conditions of life.¹ When skulls were first examined from this point of view attention was specially paid to the greatest length and breadth, and more particularly to the proportion between them, known as the cranial index. This index is obtained by multiplying the breadth by 100 and dividing by the length. Similar measurements can be made on the living head, and the corresponding index, the cephalic index as it is called, closely resembles and can be compared with the cranial index taken from the skull. For a long time anthropologists attached enormous importance to the index, and many measurements were taken on the living subject, and the averages worked out for different areas.

Of recent years there has been a change of opinion, and the index, by itself, is not valued so highly as a racial character as it was a few years back. It would be a mistake, however, to assert, as has sometimes been done, that the index has lost its value in the eyes of anthropologists. Sergi² was the first to point out that the shape of the skull was the important point, and the index was only valuable as an indication of shape. The use of averages has also been shown to be unreliable, as the presence of two types, with high and low indices respectively, in a given area, may result in a medium average, while heads of medium breadth may be relatively rare there. The height of the skull as measured from the opening of the ear, or auricular height as it is called, is now believed to be an important character; this may readily be measured in the skull, but in the case of living subjects it presents difficulties, which cannot be overcome except in a well-fitted anthropological laboratory.

Other points of shape that are important are the form of the back of the head, such as the presence of a marked

¹ Ridgeway (1908), 832; Petrie (1906), 189, and seqq.; Boas (1912).

² Sergi (1900).

occipital protuberance or a flattened occiput, the prominence and shape of the glabella and supra-orbital ridges, and the shape of the upper part of the head as viewed from the front or back. The bones of the face and the form of the jaw are in some cases also of extreme importance. Noses have, perhaps, not received all the attention they deserve. We recognise narrow or leptorrhine, and wide or platyrrhine noses, and in profile they may be straight, convex or concave. Ears have received still less attention, and it is believed that they have no racial significance, though it has been noticed that a lobeless ear, or one in which the lobe is attached to the side of the face, seems more common in north Africa than elsewhere.¹

The form of the hair has always attracted much attention, and many anthropologists consider that this is a most fundamental trait; in fact some have based the primary division of races on this point alone.² Hair may be straight, wavy, curly, frizzy and so on, and these characters are closely related to its section. Straight, lank hair is round in section, while frizzy hair is ribbon-like; the sections of wavy and curly hair being intermediate between the two.

Such are the main points which distinguish one race from another. When two races come from areas remote from one another and have had little if any contact, the difference between them is most marked and is easily recognised by the uninitiated. Thus most people can distinguish at sight between a European, a Mongol, or a Negro. But with the various races of Europe, who have been mingling to a greater or less extent for four or five thousand years, perhaps to some extent for a much longer period, it is by no means so easy to draw a distinction. As, moreover, all European peoples wear much the same clothes and differ little in their habits, at any rate when they mix, it is small wonder that the

¹ Topinard (1878), 360.

² Deniker (1900), 37-46.

ordinary layman believes that there is a European race, or, as he usually calls it, the White race, regardless of the fact that the skins of most of them are brown.

It is important, however, for us to realise that Europe is inhabited by three or four races, perhaps by remnants of other races, and by a number of people of intermediate type, the result of constant crossing. Several of these intermediate types we meet with in early days as well as among the present population, and thus they appear to be fairly constant. Though derived from the admixture of two or more of the primitive types we may almost consider them as distinct races, even if of comparatively modern origin. Others, again, first appear on the scene later, and some have only been noticed in the existing population. Several of the best known of such mixed types have been described and named, but there are many others, well known to most anthropologists, which have not yet received this distinction.

It seems probable that each type, including the crosses, has certain mental or psychical characters of its own, correlated perhaps, to some extent, with its physical characters, but due, I would suggest, to habits formed in response to an early environment. We know, in the case of the individual, how persistent throughout life are habits formed in early childhood, and we may infer that the same is true of certain fundamental traits moulded by the environment during the childhood of the race.¹

The mental and moral characters of peoples have had an untold influence upon the fate not only of themselves, but of those with whom they have come in contact. It is important, therefore, to study not only the physical characters of the races that make up the peoples of Europe, but also their mental and moral characters, which have gone farther to guide their destinies.

¹ Ellsworth Huntington has written recently "that while the mental inheritance of an individual may show no apparent relation to his present environment, each individual is born with the indelible impress of the climatic environment through which his race has passed." Huntington (1919), 151.

CHAPTER IV

THE RACES OF EUROPE

IN his well-known work on the races of Europe, Professor Ripley¹ states that the present population of that continent may be considered as derived from three main races or stocks, and this view, with perhaps a few modifications, has received the assent of the great majority of anthropologists. He points out, however, that there are traces of other races, and one of these, the Mongoloid, which is found in the north-eastern corner of Europe, seems to be a larger element in the population than Ripley imagines. It will be well, therefore, to consider Europe as being inhabited by people belonging to four races, as well as to many sub-races formed from the admixture of two or more of these; there seems also reason to believe that in some parts there still remain traces of a further admixture with races, which no longer exist in a pure form.²

Two of these four races are in some respects very similar; though they differ in stature and pigmentation, their head-form is almost identical. Some anthropologists are disposed to consider them as one race, while the majority would agree that they are both ultimately derived from a common stock, but that a long separation has caused them to develop on diverging lines, so that for the last few thousand years they may well be considered as distinct races.³

¹ Ripley (1900).

² Fleure and James, 119, 120.

³ All authorities are agreed that they came from a common stock, but there is considerable difference of opinion as to which may be considered as best representing the parent stock; the original home of this stock is also much disputed.

These are known respectively as the Mediterranean and Nordic races. A third race, differing considerably from the two former, is distinguished by the shortness and breadth of its head, and as it is found more thickly distributed in the highlands of Central Europe, it has been called the Alpine Race. The fourth, not usually recognised as a European race since its affinities are clearly Asiatic, shows marked resemblances to the Mongol Race, which occupies much of the steppe-lands of Asia. This is usually called the Mongoloid Race, and recent research seems to show that in Europe it is both older and more widely spread than was at one time believed.¹

It is to Professor Sergi² that we are indebted for the first identification of the Mediterranean Race. The members of this race may be described as comparatively short in stature, having graceful and slender bodies, light bones, and a general lack of robustness. Among them are some of still smaller stature with longer heads, about which Professor Giuffrida Ruggeri and others hold different views.³ Their skin is brown, their complexion Brunette or olive, their eyes usually dark ; but blue eyes, of the type often called the violet eye with dark eye-lashes, are not uncommon in some parts, though this trait, as I have already indicated, may be due to some slight admixture of Nordic blood. Their hair is dark, often black, and possibly always so before any admixture had occurred ; it is fine and wavy, often curly. Their heads are long and narrow, though this feature is not so uniformly pronounced at the present day as it was in times past, from which we may perhaps conclude that any broadening that has taken place may be due to admixture. The skull is frequently low, that is to say the distance between the entrance of the ear and the top of the head is small. It is not easy, however, to say

¹ Peake (1919), 181-203.

² Sergi (1901). This was preceded by an Italian edition in 1895, and a German edition in 1897.

³ Ruggeri (1915), fasc. 3-4.

whether this character is uniform throughout the race, or whether it is a local feature. The nose is narrow and well-shaped, often straight, sometimes slightly convex, rarely if ever concave. The type is usually good-looking, though not infrequently somewhat effeminate in appearance to the eyes of northerners accustomed to a coarser type of man.

The Mediterranean is not muscular nor robust, and so has tended to depend less on brute force than on strategy to attain his ends. He has lived long in communities, which are often more like cities than villages, and this city life has tended to soften asperities of manner and to lead to a kindliness and politeness which is characteristic alike of all classes of the population. His position by the shores of a land-locked sea led him at an early date to exchange commodities with neighbouring coastal and island settlements, and the instinct for trading, and so for bargaining, has become deep-seated. His lack of muscularity has tended to prevent the development of the quality of physical courage, and the lack of this, combined with his innate politeness and desire to please, has made him anxious to avoid mentioning unpleasant truths. This, combined with vivid imaginative powers, which seem common to the race wherever we find it, has frequently caused him to be considered a liar by the blunter and more literal peoples of the north; but this is mainly due to a misunderstanding, for the Mediterranean does not wish his remarks always to be taken *au pied de la lettre*.

During the neolithic age we find the Mediterranean Race occupying the whole of the North African coast and stretching as far south as the Sahara desert, if not beyond. People of this race were inhabiting Egypt in predynastic days and the level plains of Palestine between the sea and the Judæan plateau; to what extent they had settlements further north on the coast of Syria and Asia Minor is uncertain. They occupied Cyprus and Crete, and most if not all of the Ægean islands,

but until a later time do not appear to have made any settlements on the mainland of Greece or the Balkan Peninsula. Spain, Sicily and Italy seem to have been entirely in their hands, except perhaps the southern slopes of the Alps.¹

They seem also to have occupied France, except perhaps the central mountains, though they do not appear to have penetrated as far as the Belgian frontier. They had also reached the British Isles. There appears to be no evidence of their intrusion into Scandinavia, North Germany or the Baltic region, though it has been claimed that certain skeletons, found on the shores of Lake Ladoga amid neolithic surroundings, belong to this type.² It is true that these skeletons showed a low stature and the skulls were long, but as we shall see there is another long skulled race in Europe, whose stature, however, is great. But we have also seen that stature is a less certain criterion of race than other characters, and that a tall race may become short in a misery spot, as has happened in the Limousin Hills. It seems at least possible that Lake Ladoga was such a misery spot, and that the people in question were stunted members of the taller race.³

Recently skeletons of a short, long-headed race have been discovered at Anau in Turkestan, dating, it is thought, from 2000 B.C. and earlier. These have been claimed by Sergi to be members of the Mediterranean Race.⁴ But although in head-form and stature they closely resemble them, there are points about their leg bones which associate them more closely with certain Asiatic rather than with European types.⁵ Sergi has

¹ Peet (1909). This author believes that throughout neolithic times and even later the Mediterranean Race were the only occupants of Italy.

² Innostranzef (1882), in Russian; a summary of this, by E. Cartailhac, has appeared in *l'Anthropologie*, iii. (1892), 602-7. See also Ruggeri (1916), 32; and Abercromby (1898), i. 85, 86.

³ Peake (1919).

⁴ Pumpelly (1908), ii. 446.

⁵ Pumpelly (1908), ii. 464.

maintained, however, that at an early date this race penetrated Asia and advanced as far as the Ganges Valley, the present inhabitants of which, he believes, have much Mediterranean blood in their veins.¹ Although a good deal of the evidence on which Sergi's hypothesis depends is based upon philological data which will not stand examination in the light of later linguistic research, it must be admitted that many of the natives of the Ganges basin resemble in some of their characters people of the Mediterranean Race.

Professor Guiffrida Ruggeri² believes that the short variety of the Mediterranean Race, which is especially noticeable in Apulia, Corsica and Sardinia, is a distinct race, which has survived from late palæolithic days. He describes it as having a very long, narrow head and a rather long face, and has termed it on this account hypsistenocephalic. He recognises as belonging to this race certain people recently described by Fleure, who found them in the mountain regions of Wales, especially on the slopes of Plinlimmon.³ They are said to occur also in the Dordogne. According to Ruggeri this people were in Europe in late palæolithic times, and in the Mediterranean region have mixed with another race, who arrived later from the south-east, probably from Asia, and who were closely allied to the Nordic Race. These newcomers he believes to have been fairer and rather taller than the aborigines, and with rather broader heads, and the Mediterranean Race as we now find it is, he believes, the result of the admixture of these two types.⁴ As yet these ideas are by no means generally accepted by anthropologists, but of late there have been signs that opinion is tending in the direction of Ruggeri's views; certainly they cannot be left out of account in our reconstruction of the past history of the continent.

¹ Sergi (1903).

² Ruggeri (1913), fasc. 1-2; (1914), fasc. 4; Duckworth (1911), n. 3.

³ Ruggeri (1916), 14.

⁴ Ruggeri (1913).

The other long-headed race is known as the Nordic, though sometimes the terms Northern or Teutonic are used. Both these latter expressions are open to objection, the first because it is vague, for the term Northern is frequently used in a more geographical sense, and the latter because it implies the identity of the race with the people who speak or have spoken Teutonic languages. As it is rarely if ever the case that all members of one racial group speak the same type of language, or that one group of languages is confined to a single race, it is better that racial and linguistic terms should not be confused.

The Nordic Race is one of the tallest in the world, though considerable variation in stature can always be noticed among its members. We have seen that in the misery spot on the Limousin Hills some of the dwarfed inhabitants have the head-form and pigmentation of this race,¹ and I have already suggested that perhaps the same phenomenon has occurred in neolithic times on the shores of Lake Ladoga. Besides being the tallest, the Nordic is also the most muscular race, and its members have large bones, with strong muscular attachments. They are usually thin and free from any tendency to corpulency, and the joints of their limbs and digits are generally very pronounced.

Their skulls are more massive than those of the Mediterranean race, and sometimes a little broader, especially at the back, though this feature may be the result of racial admixture. In profile the forehead is frequently rather retreating, and its outline is often semi-circular from the back of the head to the eyebrow ridges, which are frequently very marked and projecting. The jaw and teeth are usually very strong and well developed, and the angle of the jaw is very obtuse.

Their hair is fair, frequently with a sandy or reddish tinge, their eyes are steel grey, sometimes shading to blue or hazel, though the latter tint is probably evidence of admixture, and their skin is as white as occurs in any

¹ Collignon (1894).

human being, and tends to turn to a brickdust shade with exposure to wind and sun. The skin is thin and apparently free from pigment, and the flow of blood beneath is markedly visible, producing in youth what we call a pink and white complexion.

Their physical strength has often tempted them to become aggressive and quarrelsome, and, though these characters are not by any means always present, they tend to be hot-headed and impulsive in youth, and at all times show a marked degree of courage. This courage is both physical and moral, and has caused them to be straightforward and honest in their dealings and truthful in their speech; so much, however, do they dislike anything equivocal that their remarks are frequently so candid as to be rude, for they would rather be truthful and outspoken, even at the risk of failing to be polite and considerate to the feelings of others. This sturdiness of disposition has ever made them resentful of the dominion of others, and their motto is that they "never, never will be slaves," though they have not always objected to reducing others to a state of serfdom.

The origin and early history of the Nordic Race is much disputed. In late neolithic days we find on the Russian steppe, east of the Dnieper, remains of what appears to be a similar type, living, if we may judge by these remains, a nomadic life as herders of cattle.¹ Again, about the same time, we find men of this type entering Sweden, apparently from the Danish islands, and their arrival in Scania seems marked by the introduction of tombs constructed of large stones, and what we know as megalithic culture.²

Much earlier, at the very beginning of the neolithic age, in the period known as Campignian, when the Baltic was an inland sea, certain people were living on the coast of Denmark and Sweden, feeding largely on shell-fish. They threw away their old implements and broken pottery

¹ Peake (1916), 163; Minns, 142-5.

² Montelius (1888), 37; see also Peake (1919).

into the heaps of shells that accumulated around their dwellings, and it is from investigating these heaps, or kitchen-middens as they are called, that we know about their culture.¹ In 1844 Nilsson found in the undisturbed portion of a kitchen-midden at Staengenaes in Sweden, at a depth of three feet, the skeleton of a tall long-headed man or woman, with a height of five feet ten inches, and with a cranial index between 72 and 73.² It is therefore claimed that the Nordic type was in Scandinavia at the beginning of the neolithic age.

More recently a still earlier culture, dating from the close of palæolithic times, has been found round the shores of the Baltic; this is called the Maglemöse culture,³ and it is thought by some to be ancestral to the culture of the kitchen-middens, and thus to prove that the Nordic Race was settled in the Baltic region before the close of palæolithic times. These finds are, however, susceptible of another explanation, and I have elsewhere⁴ suggested that they are rather to be looked upon as ancestral to another Baltic culture, which existed in fairly early neolithic times, and which is known as East Scandinavian or Arctic culture. Now it has also been pointed out that the Arctic culture seems to be ancestral to that of the modern Lapps, and a skull found at Möen in the Danish archipelago seems to belong to the race responsible for this culture. This skull is definitely Mongoloid, so that we may well believe that the Maglemöse as well as the Arctic culture was introduced by an early wave of that Mongoloid Race which we still find in north and north-east Europe.⁵

It was before the close of the palæolithic age that there entered Europe from Asia Minor a third race, the Alpine

¹ Lubbock (1865), 171-187. See also the same writer (1861).

² Nilsson (1868), 116, 117, 123.

³ Osborn (1918), 486 and seqq.; Breuil (1912), 235-238; Obermaier (1912), 467-469.

⁴ Peake (1919), 181-203.

⁵ Peake (1919). It seems possible that remnants of this Mongoloid race still survive in the island of Möen, where Beddoe found a black-haired type.

Race, which in time occupied the highlands of Central Europe from the Balkan Mountains to the *massif central* of France; they seem to have come in three or more waves at different periods.¹ The first wave, as we have seen, arrived during the last stages of the palæolithic age, and the few skeletons that have survived from that time have not yet received the study that they deserve. Some time during the neolithic age arrived another wave, which passed into the highlands of Austria, Switzerland, Germany and Central France, where they still form the bulk of the present population.² This type, which we will call the Western Alpines, are usually of a short or medium stature, short in the neck, of a "stocky" build, and tend readily to corpulency especially in middle life. They have darkish skins of a yellowish or parchment-like type, brown eyes and dark or brown hair, sometimes ranging through mahogany to chestnut shades. Fair-haired men with fair complexions are sometimes found among them, as are indeed blue eyes, but both these features may with good reason be attributed to later admixture of Nordic blood.

Their heads are very short and broad, the index often rising to well over 90, but the most marked feature in the form of their skulls is the flattened occiput, which makes the backs of their heads somewhat resemble a reading desk. Their noses are fairly wide and usually fleshy; they are sometimes straight but more often concave. Their hair is straight and lank and generally of a coarse texture. By the close of the neolithic age they had penetrated the upland regions of France, as far as the Carcassonne gap, if not further, they had settled in the open spaces in the forest to the north of the Carpathians and the

¹ Peake (1916), 160 and seqq.

² Some archæologists are of opinion that the Alpine inhabitants of Central Europe in neolithic times arrived there early in that period from the west, and were the descendants of those who reached western Europe at the close of the palæolithic age. Such a movement is quite possible, but unless a fresh wave had arrived from Asia Minor, it would be difficult to account for the chain of lake-dwellings and the presence in Switzerland of Anatolian fruits and grains.

Thuringian mountains, and had reached the southern slopes of the Alps near Genoa.

The third wave of Alpines differs in several respects from the last mentioned. In the first place they are tall and slender, sometimes rivalling the Nordics in stature. In pigmentation they are much the same as their Western neighbours, except that the mahogany and chestnut shades of hair seem to be absent. The head-form is somewhat different ; though still short and broad, its horizontal dimensions are less and its height considerably greater. Sometimes the back of the head appears nearly if not quite perpendicular, while in others the flattened occiput is so exaggerated as to give the effect of a slice having been cut off the skull from behind the top of the forehead to the back of the neck. The hair is much the same, but the nose is less broad, seldom concave, often straight and not uncommonly aquiline. This type is found throughout the Balkan peninsula and in Asia Minor, while in the Tyrol it seems to have mingled with the rear-guard of the previous wave. A very tall variety of the race, known as the Dinaric type,¹ is found in Dalmatia, and has furnished Venice with its gondoliers. The variety in Asia Minor, known as the Anatolian or Armenoid,² shows more often the extreme occipital flattening mentioned above.

The Alpines are by nature democratic, and take a deep interest in the government of their towns and villages, but having settled for the most part in mountainous regions, where their valley villages are much cut off from one another, there is usually a lack of cohesion between the various communities, and their interests tend to be confined to the affairs of the village rather than to those of the land as a whole ; their outlook is communal and municipal rather than national or imperial. Though there are exceptions, particularly in the Balkan peninsula, they are not as a rule a warlike people, or one

¹ Deniker (1900), 333, 4.

² Ripley, 387 ; Elliot-Smith (1911), 109.

possessed of courage in a high degree, but in spite of this appearance of cowardice, which perhaps might better be described as an intense love of peace, they will defend their homes with the greatest tenacity. For they are essentially a home-loving people, with no desire to wander, especially on the sea. Living in lands, where from the altitude the winter is long and the ground covered for months with a deep mantle of snow, they have developed care and forethought in the matter of food supply, and this seems to have encouraged habits of thrift, with a tendency to hoarding. This, in its turn, has encouraged them to become small capitalists, and so petty traders, though they are too cautious to embark often on large and speculative enterprises.¹

I have already referred to a fourth race, the Mongoloid, which seems to be a more important component of the present European population than some authorities have hitherto recognised. They have not been so closely studied as some of the other types, as they are only found in their purity in the extreme north-east of the continent. Their stature is very variable, but it seems to be rather above the average in height except in the misery spots close to the arctic circle, where they are much dwarfed. They have black hair and swarthy complexions and are peculiarly beardless. Their heads are short and broad, their faces round, and their cheek-bones high. Though the cephalic index does not differ markedly from that found among the Alpines, the form of the face bones and the "squint eyes" sharply mark them off from that race. They are found in their greatest purity in Lappland and in the extreme north-eastern corner of Russia, but they form a considerable part of the population of Finland and Esthonia, and are found in scattered "islands" of varying dimensions along the upper reaches of the Volga, in a line from Petrograd to the southern spurs of the Urals, and again from the junction

¹ Ripley, 549, 550; Collignon (1895), 125; Lapouge (1896), 407.

of the Volga and the Kama to the regions east of the White Sea.¹

That they have affinities with the Mongol Race of High Asia is certain, but to what extent authorities are not agreed. It may be that they represent a Mongol stock mixed with some other element, or, as is more likely, they may be early wanderers from the original Mongol home, who left the cradle of that race before it had become so highly specialised as we find it now in Asia. These people appear to have entered Europe early in neolithic times, if not before, either round the southern spurs of the Ural mountains or through the passes near Perm. Thence one stream appears to have moved northwards, up the course of the Kama towards the Arctic Ocean, while the other passed westward along the upper reaches of the Volga towards the Baltic. Early in neolithic times their culture spread around the coast of Sweden, Finland, Courland and as far west, at least, as the mouth of the Oder, and had probably reached the Danish islands. If I am right in suggesting that the Maglemöse culture was an earlier phase of the work of these people, they had arrived on the scene in the latter stages of palæolithic times and had already extended still further westward.²

Though many individuals are to be found of pure or almost pure type, especially in those regions, such as islands or mountain valleys, which are known as areas of isolation, the majority of the people that one meets with, especially in this country, show signs of more or less admixture. Among these certain definite types have been

¹ Ripley, map facing p. 363. Ripley, however, considers that this Mongoloid element is not Finnic, but that the proto-Finns were closely allied to the Nordics. The question is merely one of terms; it is agreed that both Mongoloid and Nordic elements exist among the present Finnish population. I am suggesting that the term Finn and the Finnish language belong more properly to the Mongoloid sub-stratum, and that the Nordic element is the result of a later infiltration. Giuffrida Ruggeri is inclined to agree with Ripley, but in a footnote admits the possibility of my contention (1916), 23, f-n. See also Peake (1919).

² Some evidence has turned up recently which suggests that the Maglemöse people had Aurignacian affinities; this may, however, be due solely to contact. The Siberian affinities are as strong, if not stronger. The racial identity of this people must be left an open question until skeletal evidence is available.

recognised, which occur with considerable frequency and have a more or less definite distribution ; in some cases it can be shown from archæological evidence that the type is of considerable antiquity.

One of the most interesting of these types or sub-races has only recently been recognised and described.¹ It has all the colouring of the Mediterranean Race, but the head is too broad and the jaw too square. People of this type are usually heavy in build and sometimes, though not by any means invariably, of great stature. It has been conjectured that they are the result of an early admixture between men of the Mediterranean Race and those of the Alpine, probably of its Eastern variety, and that this admixture took place in late neolithic times somewhere in the neighbourhood of the Ægean Sea. On the other hand it may be noted that early monuments of the Sumerians in Mesopotamia² and of Elamites from Susa³ show a type which strongly resembles this.

The distribution of this type is curious, for it has been found commonest in those regions which abound in dolmens and other rough stone monuments of the type known as megalithic ; it has also been noted that it is found among the rich merchant class at the principal mercantile ports in the Mediterranean at the present day, and the evidence of portraits shows us that it was not uncommon at the time of the Renaissance in such trading cities as Florence and Venice ; there is reason, too, for believing that one of the more important elements in the population of ancient Etruria was also of this type.⁴ A mass of evidence is growing which tends to show that men of this type were trading in the Mediterranean and still further west and north as the stone age was giving

¹ Fleure and James, 117, 137-142.

² King (1910), Figs. 20, 23, 24, 39, 40, 44, 45 ; in support of this view see Sayce (1921).

³ Morgan (1905), Plates xv., xvi., xxiii.

⁴ Many of the portraits in the tombs, and especially the figures on the alabaster cists, show people apparently of this type. Dennis (1883), i. 261, ii. 332 ; Taylor (1874), 94 ; Lovett Cameron, 188. See also *Man*, XVI., 68.

way to that of metal, that they, in fact, introduced the knowledge of the latter commodity to the inhabitants of the north-west. It has further been shown that their trading ventures were in search of gold, tin, copper and other precious materials,¹ and for this reason it has been suggested that in future they shall be known by the name of "the Prospectors."

Other types intermediate between the Mediterranean and the Alpine are to be found, especially in Italy, but so far these have not been separated or described ; but it was north of the mountain zone that most admixture has taken place, and in the plain of North Europe several types are recognised, the result of admixture between the Alpine and the Nordic races.

About the time that the Prospectors were searching the west for metals, there arrived in Britain and in Denmark a people who buried their dead in round barrows, with vases of a peculiar form, which were formerly called drinking-cups, but are now known as beakers. It was at one time thought that these men introduced the knowledge of bronze into this country, and so they were known as Bronze Age men or the Bronze Age invaders of Britain.² It is now believed that they reached here ignorant of the use of metal and so this name is being abandoned as is another name by which they were known, that of Round Barrow men, for not all the round barrows can be attributed to men of this type. Owing to the almost invariable association of skeletons of this type with pottery of the beaker form, it has recently been suggested that they should be known as the Beaker-folk, or the Beaker-makers,³ and this name will be used for them in these pages. The Beaker-folk were fairly tall and with very robust and muscular frames, and of heavier build than the Nordics. Of their colouring we know little but men of the same type now living seem usually to have

¹ Perry (1915), lx., No. 1.

² Beddoe (1885), 16, 17 ; Keith (1915), 12-22.

³ Peake (1916), 157 ; Fleure and James, 135-7.

hair of auburn tints, and brown or more often hazel eyes. Their heads were large and square, somewhat resembling the Alpine, but not so broad and without marked occipital flattening, while the top of the skull presents a somewhat ridge-like form. Their faces were square and massive, their jaw strong, but the most marked feature was the strong development of the supraorbital ridges, the part of the forehead upon which the eyebrows are set.¹

There is ample evidence that on their way to Britain and Denmark they passed between the Rhine and the Weser, coming from the neighbourhood of Bohemia,² and Dr. Keith has argued that their original home was probably in Galicia,³ from which I have deduced that it was probably a people of this type that was responsible for that culture which is found in late neolithic times in south-west Russia, and which is known as the Tripolje culture.⁴

They seem to have come to this country from the mouth of the Rhine and landed on the southern and eastern shores of Great Britain from Dorset to the Moray Frith, but those who landed north of the Humber seem to have been more numerous and were accompanied by men of a more characteristically Alpine type.⁵ It seems probable that others passed from Galicia to the south-west, to Bosnia and the Po Valley, and it may be that men of this type were among those who founded Rome, for it has been noted that many of the busts of Roman senators display features resembling this type; it is not unknown in Italy, especially in the north of that country, at the present day.

The Beaker-folk are usually men of few words but of strong character and inflexible determination and

¹ Parsons (1913), 550-592.

² Abercromby (1912).

³ Keith (1915).

⁴ Peake (1916), 164, 5.

⁵ Lowe (1902-4).

unemotional behaviour. They are frequently men of commanding intellect, and the type is found most commonly among the successful professional men and administrators.

Several other types seem to have mixed in the northern plain, of which two most concern us here. One, known by some as the Belgic¹ and by others as the Brythonic type,² seems to have been formed to the east of the Rhine and to have spread in various directions during the centuries immediately preceding the Christian era. It is tall, frequently as tall as the Nordic which it closely resembles, but it is fleshier and less spare in build. In colour the hair is perhaps a shade redder, the moustaches more bristly, the eyes are bluer and less grey, while the complexion is less transparent, being sometimes a fixed red but more often a pale *matt* shade. The head is much broader than in the case of the Nordic, though not so broad as the Alpine, or even the Beaker-man. It appears almost spherical in shape and has neither the rugged outline of the latter nor the flattened occiput of the former. The nose is less narrow than in the Nordic, but varies considerably in shape, being often large, "blobby," and ungainly. This type is found in the British Isles and in France, and sporadically in other parts of Europe; I have noted its presence in considerable numbers in Albanian regiments in Greece. A somewhat similar type, but with much redder hair, is not uncommonly found in what was once Burgundy, and is especially noticeable, I am told, in Lorraine.³

The other type to which I would draw attention is found among the skeletons taken from the Saxon graveyards of this country. Often called Nordic, it differs in many particulars from the true Nordic model, which is occasionally found with it. The stature is less, seldom rising above five feet eight inches, or five feet nine inches,

¹ Beddoe (1885), 23.

² Fleure and James, 146.

³ The type has been noticed there by Professor Fleure.

the bones are less massive and muscular, while the head is considerably wider at the back than is usual in the pure type, and takes the form called by Beddoe "coffin-shaped," and by Sergi *pentagonoides acutus*. The top of the skull in profile is a less perfect arch than we find in the Nordic, and the aperture of the nose shows that it was not truly leptorrhine.¹

People corresponding to this description are very commonly met with in this country, especially among the rural population of the southern counties; they are also to be found in northern France and in north-west Germany. Their hair is usually fair, flaxen or tow-coloured, while their eyes are pale blue or sometimes hazel.

In the plain of North Europe many other mixed types may be found, few of which have been carefully described, and none of which much concern us here. The typical German soldier, with ashy fair hair, eyes of a washed-out blue, tall stature and broad head with flattened occiput is well known to most of us. Farther east is a somewhat similar type with much shorter stature. Deniker has described some of these types under the names of Sub-northern, Vistulan and Eastern,² but they all show signs of being various compounds of Nordic and Alpine elements.

It is not uncommon, both in France and this country, to find individuals exhibiting characters which are intermediate between the Nordic and the Mediterranean. As both these races have in a pure form invaded these areas at one time or another, this is what might be expected. But it has recently been suggested that perhaps some of those of this midway type may not be so much the result of admixture as a survival from the still largely undifferentiated type which was here at the close of the palæolithic age.³

¹ Parsons (1913); Peake and Hooton (1915), 92-130.

² Deniker (1900).

³ Fleure (1918), p. 19.

CHAPTER V

THE ORIGIN OF THE VILLAGE COMMUNITY IN EUROPE

As we have seen, wheat was indigenous to Syria and northern Mesopotamia, and it seems probable that it was in this region that it was first cultivated. Thence its use spread to the alluvial lands at the head of the Persian Gulf, and southwards towards the Judæan plateau. There is reason for believing that a people from the latter region entered Egypt some centuries before 4000 B.C.,¹ and it is about this time, in the later predynastic centuries, that we find wheat cultivated by the dwellers on the banks of the Nile, though there is a possibility that it was brought in at a still earlier date by invaders from the south-east.² There are reasons, too, for thinking that the knowledge of this grain spread also to the inhabitants of Armenia and the Anatolian plain, who had already made experiments in the culture of certain fruits, especially apples, plums and cherries.

As far as one can judge from the very meagre evidence at one's disposal, the members of the Mediterranean Race outside Egypt, were not great cultivators of grain in early days, though it would not be safe to assume that all of them were entirely ignorant of its use in neolithic times. Still, the balance of evidence available seems to show that in Italy,³ at least, agriculture was at this time unknown. They seem to have depended for food largely

¹ Elliot-Smith (1911) *passim*. It seems probable that these people introduced the Egyptian calender, which began 4241 B.C., according to Breasted (1912), 14.

² Breasted (1912), 25, 26; Professor S. Langdon believes that these people came from Sumer, *Nature*, cvii. 315.

³ Peet (1909), 109.

upon fishing, and herding sheep and goats. Though still in a hunting-pastoral state they seem to have developed trade relations between their different centres, and an active commerce was carried on in many parts of the Mediterranean region, the commodities carried being chiefly implements of obsidian, a volcanic glass found in Santorin, the Lipari islands and a few other spots.¹

While the people of the Mediterranean Race were engaged in fishing and in tending their flocks of sheep and goats, those of the Nordic Race were domesticating the ox in the steppes of Russia and Turkestan, and here seem to have been living a nomadic life, driving large herds of cattle, sheep and goats from one pasture to another, an operation immensely facilitated in these extensive steppes by the use of the horse which seems to have been domesticated in still earlier days. About 3000 B.C. or earlier, members of this race penetrated the forests of the North German plain, and reached the Danish islands, whence they passed to the south of Sweden;² they carried with them oxen, sheep, goats, horses and pigs, and cooking pots with hemispherical bases.³ A little later others seem to have moved northwards and penetrated the dense Russian forest as far as the upper reaches of the Volga. Here they found a Mongoloid people, living largely by fishing in the waters of that river and its tributaries; with these they appear to have coalesced, producing a culture, reminiscent of the primitive arctic culture on the one hand and on the other of the civilisation of the steppe. From the place where remains of this civilisation were first met with it is known as the Fationovo Culture,⁴ and it is

¹ At Santorin, the ancient Melos, obsidian was worked from very early times, and implements of this material were exported to the neighbouring islands. Bosanquet, 216-233. The abundance of obsidian implements found at various sites in Sicily and Malta suggest that Pantellaria and the Lipari Isles, where this mineral is also found, were centres of export. Peet (1909), 150; Mosso (1910), 365-7.

² Peake (1916), 163.

³ Montelius (1888), 28; Smith (1910), 340, 346.

⁴ Tallgren (1916), i. 10.

permissible to suggest that the descendants of these fair Nordic men of the steppes and the dark Mongoloid people of the upper Volga basin are those red Finns, who still inhabit these regions, and who have hitherto been such a puzzle to anthropologists.¹ It is possible, too, that some Nordics wandered still further north, to the shores of Lake Ladoga, where from scarcity of food their stature considerably diminished.

We first meet with evidence of agriculture in the Lake dwellings of Switzerland and other places in Central Europe in fairly early neolithic times.² Such evidence as exists seems to show that the inhabitants of these pile-dwellings were of the Alpine Race.³ These people cultivated wheat and barley, both of which, as we have seen, are of Asiatic origin, and the custom of erecting pile-dwellings in marshes and shallow lakes can be traced eastward to Macedonia and Asia Minor.⁴

We cannot be wrong, therefore, in assuming that these early agriculturists had come from Anatolia and the highlands of Armenia, and were the second wave of Alpines to reach Europe. They lived, as we have seen, in pile-dwellings near the margins of the lakes, cultivating small patches of land near the shore, letting their pigs root in the marshes and their cattle, sheep and goats graze on the high alps during the summer months, and stalling them near the village in the winter.⁵ As the cattle had to be fed in the cold season, which is of long duration in these alpine regions, it was necessary to cut grass for hay, and the extensive swamps, which encircle many of these mountain lakes, provided well-watered

¹ See especially Nilsson (1868). This author believed that these red-haired men were the worshippers of Thor, and distinct from the fair-haired worshippers of Odin. See also Peake (1919), 181 and seqq.

² The Robenhausen period, *vid.* Keller (1866), *passim*.

³ Peake (1916), 160-2, where the whole question is discussed at length; and Schenk (1912), 533-544.

⁴ Herodotus, v. 16; Hippocrates, xxxvii.; see also Keller (1866), 315, 316. Cf. *supr.* page 53 f-n. 2.

⁵ Keller (1866), 57, 297.

meadows. Here, then, we have all the conditions that are necessary for the rise of a community such as we find to have existed in the Valley villages in England. More than this, the vast majority of these lake villages were in Savoy, Switzerland, and throughout the upper reaches, at any rate, of the Danube basin, and it is in this latter area that the three-field system, which we have seen was almost if not quite universal in our Valley villages, has survived to quite recent times.¹

Here, then, in the narrow valleys of the mountain region of Central Europe do we see our village community, in its simplest form in Europe, well established fairly early in neolithic times. That it was introduced here from further east, from Anatolia and Armenia, seems almost certain, as in these parts of Asia alone will be found some of the plants that the people cultivated. The long winters of this alpine region necessitated forethought, and during the summer months it was necessary to lay by ample stores of food and fuel to last through the cold period; thus thrifty habits and a practice of hoarding became a necessity, for the thriftless would have perished.

For fear of the bears and wolves which infested the forest, and which became menacing in winter, they placed their villages in safety within the lake, for these Alpine people were not courageous hunters, and preferred to defend themselves against the assaults of their foes than to meet and attack them in the open. Such village life led to community of goods, for crowded together in a lake village one family could not well live in luxury while others perished of want. Thus we find those characters of thrift, communism and democracy fostered by the environment in which members of the Alpine Race lived for many thousands of years.

As the villages were far apart, often only one or two in each valley, and as the Alpine folk were busily engaged in tilling their fields, there was little intercourse between the different communities. Not being hunters, the wild

¹ Seebohm (1890), 373.

forest land was left to a large extent unexplored. So each village tended to become a state, and federation came about slowly if at all. The village state was the ideal as was the city state in Greece, the population of which was largely Alpine, and there was no inducement to the villagers to combine, even when attacked by a common foe, until after many bitter experiences those in Switzerland combined early in the fourteenth century to expel their dominant lords. But by this time Switzerland contained other elements than those of the Alpine Race. In this connection we may again see an analogy in Greece. In Homeric times the Nordic leaders combined readily against the Trojan foe, but when Persia threatened their independence early in the fifth century, the Nordic blood had nearly disappeared and it was with difficulty that the states could be got to combine against the eastern despotism. Later, when the Peloponnesian war had weeded out what few Nordic elements had up till then remained, all cohesion among the different states disappeared, and they fell ready victims to the powers of Macedon and Rome.

During the neolithic age these Alpine agriculturists spread over all the central mountain regions of Europe, and came into contact with Mediterranean settlers in the west. There are no signs of conflict having occurred, but they seem to have settled down peaceably side by side, and at Neuchâtel two sets of burials are found, distinct yet contemporary, one of men of the Alpine and the other of men of the Mediterranean Race.¹ They also descended the northern slopes of the mountains and penetrated to some extent into a northern forest, occupying certain clearings, where beds of sand and gravel made the forest thinner.² Here the dangers from wild beasts were, if anything, greater than in their former mountain home, and the opportunity for erecting lake dwellings was lacking. So they erected

¹ *Mem. de l'école d'anthrop.*, v. (1895), 162, 167.

² Vidal de la Blache, in *Lavis*, I., i., 30-39; map facing p. 54.

nucleated villages, surrounded with a thick fence for mutual protection.

To the north-east and east of the mountain area, in the region now known as Galicia, Bukovina, the Ukraine, Bessarabia, Moldavia, and Wallachia, the grassy steppe reached to the foothills of the Carpathians. Whether this steppe had at one time been occupied by the nomad Nordic cattle-men we cannot say, but at the time with which we are now dealing this area was occupied by an agricultural people, whose civilisation differed considerably from that of the Alpines in the mountain regions. These people lived in pit dwellings of a peculiar type, and the presence of hand-mills and half-cooked corn among their remains proves to us that they were agriculturists. From the site first explored this civilisation is known as the Tripolje culture, and it is curious that in the first phase known to us we find them using axes of copper, perhaps introduced by traders coming from the Ægean to the Black Sea ports, while in the second phase, which is in many other respects more developed, all objects of metal are absent. Direct evidence of the racial affinities of the Tripolje people is not available, for few remains of their dead have been found, and of those which have been discovered most, if not all, have been cremated.¹ There are reasons, however, as I have stated above, and have dealt with more fully elsewhere,² for believing that they were the ancestors of the Beaker-folk who are found later invading Denmark and Britain. These Beaker-folk, as we have seen, appear to be a Nordic Alpine cross, and we can only conjecture that some of the Alpines settled early in the western steppe, introducing there the cultivation of grain, and that some centuries before the time we are dealing with they mixed with some Nordic hunters from the adjoining forest or steppe-land, and established in time a somewhat stable cross.

¹ Minns, 140.

² Peake (1916), 164-5.

We have left our Nordic cattle men on the steppes of Russia and Turkestan, east of the Dnieper. Here they followed their flocks and herds on horseback from one pasturage to another, spending their spare time in horse-racing and athletic exercises, and occasionally fighting for their pastures with Mongol or Mongoloid hordes whose feeding grounds impinged on theirs in the north and east.

But, as Ellsworth Huntington has shown,¹ the steppe regions are liable to intermittent droughts, when the pasture becomes scanty, and land that has been capable of feeding many thousands of head of cattle becomes suddenly unable to support any but the smallest herds. The steppe-folk then find that they must seek fresh pastures or see their property die before their eyes. Rather than suffer such pecuniary loss they usually strike out for better watered regions on their borders, but as these are generally occupied by settled agriculturists, there arises that warfare between pastoral nomad and tiller of the soil, which is embodied in many early legends, such as the story of Cain and Abel, of Eber and Airem,² and perhaps in that of Romulus and Remus.

Semitic scholars trace four raids from the steppe-lands of Arabia into the Mesopotamian lowlands, each of which introduced a different dialect of the Semitic tongue. These may be thus enumerated :

- a.* The Akkadian. 3000 B.C. or earlier.
- b.* The Canaanite. 2400 B.C.
- c.* The Aramæan. 1350 B.C.
- d.* The Arabian. 500 B.C.

Similar irruptions appear to have taken place from the Russian and Turkestan steppes. Of the first we have no direct evidence, but the wanderings of Nordic peoples across Germany to Scandinavia may date from that time, and possibly the coalescence of Nordic and Alpine people in the Tripolje region, though one might reasonably expect an earlier date for that.

¹ Ellsworth Huntington (1907); (1911).

² Rhys and Brynmor-Jones (1900), 45; cf. also Gir. Camb., III., vii.

The Canaanite invasion synchronises with an irruption of the steppe-folk across the Dnieper, which I have fully described elsewhere,¹ and which I will deal with later, and in all probability with the northward move of the Nordics to the Volga basin and the foundation of the Fationovo culture. The Aramæan invasion appears to have no counterpart in Europe, as far as we can judge, but the Arabian invasion is paralleled by the intrusion of Attila and the Huns.

It was towards the close of the neolithic age in North Europe, when copper was already known in the Mediterranean basin, and the secret of bronze had been discovered, though it was not yet widely known, that we find the Tripolje culture suddenly destroyed, evidently by invading hordes, and the disappearance of the nomad steppe-folk from their pasture grounds seems to leave us in no doubt that they were the invaders. These Nordic cattle-men seem to have crossed the Dnieper about 2400 B.C., to have driven out the Tripolje men, enslaved their women and children, and to have rushed over the open plain to the north of the Carpathians as far west as Silesia, and to have entered Bohemia and the plain of Hungary. Their more southward invasion, which led them to Thessaly and across the Hellespont into Asia Minor I have dealt with elsewhere² and it does not affect our problem, but it is of their settlement in Bohemia and Hungary, and the mountain regions around them, that I wish to speak in more detail.

As we have seen, the Nordic race is strong, active, courageous and at times aggressive, while the life on the steppes has been one of comparative leisure devoted to riding, racing, athletic exercises and war. These people suddenly flooded the grassy plain of Hungary, where food for their horses and cattle was abundant, and found themselves surrounded by industrious agricultural communities, peaceful and unaccustomed to war, governing

¹ Peake (1916), 165 and seqq.

² Peake (1916).

their village communities in democratic fashion, but unaccustomed to combining in large numbers for mutual defence. That they made themselves masters of the whole of this area there can be no doubt, and we might have expected them to have mingled with the Alpines that surrounded them and so developed a mixed type like the Beaker-folk. No doubt to some extent this did occur, for people of somewhat intermediate type are not uncommon in this area as we have seen. But we have evidence that this was rather the exception than the rule at this time.

Several cemeteries have been explored in Austria and the regions near which date from about 900 B.C., or perhaps earlier; the most famous of these is at Hallstatt in the Salzkammergut.¹ Here we find that some of the people buried their dead while others cremated the corpses. This seems to show us that we are dealing with a mixed people, some of whom have come from the steppes, where inhumation was the rule, and others from the forest lands, where fuel is abundant, and cremation more generally practised. Of the racial types of those who burnt their dead we can, of course, say nothing, but among the skeletons that have been discovered at Hallstatt two types are to be found; the one is of great stature with long heads, in which we recognise our Nordic steppe-folk, the other, of which there are fewer, is broad-headed and comparatively short.² Intermediate types are rare, from which we must infer that while these two races have lived side by side for more than a thousand years, they have rarely, if ever, inter-married.

Now the Nordic, wherever we meet him, whether at the present day or in the past, is always found to be racially exclusive and to have what we now term a strong colour prejudice. He considers himself a "white man," and talks in disparaging terms of "natives," "dagos,"

¹ Sacken (1868).

² Skeletons of both types are to be seen in the little museum at Hallstatt.

and "niggers." He dislikes mixing socially with those whom he considers are not white, and though he occasionally mates with them, to marry them is to invite social ostracism. It may be that this trait is not peculiar to the Nordic Race, but is rather the outcome of his life upon the steppes, for another steppe-folk, the Hebrews, when they settled in Canaan, despised the settled folk that they found there, refused in most cases to marry them, considering themselves a chosen people, and termed all the rest of the world Gentiles. The Arabs had a tendency to do the same, but allow converts to Islam to come within the pale, and reserve the opprobrious term of "Infidel" for those who refuse to do so.

Whether or no this trait is common to all steppe-folk it is characteristic of the Nordics wherever we find them. The original Hellenes called all the aborigines Pelasgians, which according to Leaf¹ was not an ethnic appellation, and in later days termed all non-hellenic people barbarians; at Athens, at any rate, marriage with a stranger was prohibited. The Vikings spoke with disdain of Finns and Dverggar-folk. The Franks kept themselves an exclusive aristocracy and would not marry outside their circle, and the French *noblesse* before the revolution was as rigid a caste as the corresponding Khshatrya in India. Where they were few in a distant land greater care seems to have been taken to retain their purity of blood, thus the aristocracy of Spain required sixty-four quarterings in the arms of those to whom they allied themselves, while German and Austrian royalties, and even some of the Austrian noble houses, had strict family laws which prevent marriage outside a charmed circle.

We shall not be surprised then that the Nordic steppe-folk on their arrival in Central Europe kept themselves as a caste apart, we should rather be astonished if they had not done so. That being the case the existence of the two types in comparative purity in the cemetery at Hallstatt is what we should expect.

¹ Leaf (1912), 331-353.

But if a conquering, exclusive race, of active habits and military tendencies, enters a land filled with villages of hard-working agriculturists of a peaceful and democratic turn of mind, there is only one thing that can happen. The incomers will establish themselves as a military aristocracy, and expect the conquered to provide them with the necessities of life in return for administering the country, policing the wild uninhabited regions, thus keeping both robbers and wild beasts at bay, and defending the land against possible invaders. That was the rôle taken up by the Teutonic tribes who conquered the Roman Empire, and who were mainly, if not exclusively, of Nordic type, and that, I suggest, was the part played by the Nordic steppe-folk in the economy of Central Europe throughout the Bronze Age and subsequent centuries.¹ Thus the free village communities, which had existed democratically without a chief through neolithic days, came under the domination of a lord, who in one form or another has existed to our own time.

It was shortly before 1200 B.C. that changes seem to have occurred which were to affect a great part of Europe. Fed and clothed by their willing serfs, who were doubtless grateful to their lords for protecting them from wild men and beasts, the aristocracy of Central Europe grew in numbers and wealth. They had paid much attention to weapons, as befits a military caste, and had developed a sword, of a leaf-shaped pattern, which they considered more effective than the long rapier-like dirk used in the Mediterranean and the west. Whether at this time the climate proved unpleasant, and the rainfall in the mountains became unduly heavy, as has been suggested,² or whether it was merely the ever-recurring problem, "what shall we do with our younger sons?" we cannot

¹ The same thing seems to have occurred in India; cf. Gomme (1890), ch. ii., especially pp. 29 and seqq. In connection with the events described in the previous paragraphs, compare Vinogradoff (1920), i. 216 and seqq.; the early history of the Aryans as he there describes it seems to correspond with that of the steppe-folk sketched here.

² Myres (1912), 334, 5.

tell, but between 1250 and 1150 B.C. they invaded almost every part of Europe. We know them by their swords, which seem to have been developed in the Hungarian Plain, and these swords have been found from Greece to Ireland. In the former country we recognise the "northern invaders" of the archæologists, who have termed them Achæans,¹ and it was their grandsons who led the great expedition against Troy, which was probably defended by men of the same stock. A century later they entered France, probably through the pass of Belfort, and rapidly conquered the greater part of that country. The occurrence of swords of this type shows that they came here too, probably to exploit the Irish gold fields, for blades of this type have been found in great numbers in the south-east of England, and a few of them in the region lying between this area and the coast of Wales,² while more than a hundred have been found in Ireland.³

Unfortunately these swords are never found in graves, and the tombs, which we believe to date from this time, contain only urns filled with burnt bones but with no implements or weapons by which they can be dated with precision. The general inference, however, is that the people of Central Europe invaded France and Britain as well as Greece, and if that were so we may conjecture that they were officered by the members of the Nordic aristocracy, and that the rank and file were composed of Alpines, or men of mixed blood, the offspring of irregular unions. As the Alpine men are poor fighters, except when defending their homes, and people of pure Alpine type have always been rare in this country,⁴ the latter

¹ e.g., Ridgeway (1901).

² Evans (1881), 274, 282, 285; see also Eleventh Annual Report of the National Museum of Wales (1918), 10.

³ Evans (1881), 291.

⁴ Grant (1916), 115. This author has asserted that the Alpine type is not to be found at the present day in the British Isles, but their presence is attested by Fleure and James (1916), and by Gray and Tocher (1900), No. 84, pp. 86-8. Mr. O. G. S. Crawford has recently shown (1921), that settlements resembling those of the lake-dwellers

supposition is the more likely. That they came in considerable numbers the quantity of swords of this type in our museums and collections testifies; that having arrived they became lords of the land may, I think, be taken for granted.

Their entry into France is signalled by the sudden appearance of bronze sickles in great numbers,¹ from which it may be inferred that they brought into that country improved agricultural methods, perhaps in some parts introduced the cultivation of grain into the country. Similar sickles have been found, though not so abundantly, in these islands, though it is doubtful if the invaders were the first here to till the soil.

One band of the men of the leaf-shaped sword seem to have passed from Bohemia through the Moravian gate, and to have travelled eastward along the foothills of the Carpathians, where their route may be traced by a certain type of pin.² Across the Russian steppe all signs of these disappear, but they appear again on the banks of the Koban River just north of the Caucasus.³ To the south of these mountains an easily worked ore of iron occurs,⁴ and the tribes located there had already learned to smelt it and made from the metal simple implements for household use. The new-comers in the Koban region soon saw the value of this discovery, and either made or caused to be made for them sword blades of iron or steel, while retaining bronze for the hilts. The knowledge of

of Switzerland and Savoy occurred between Brentford and Isleworth, as well as elsewhere in this country; skulls found at the first-named site have been pronounced by Dr. A. Keith to resemble those of the people of the Swiss lake-dwellings, while the tools found are exactly like those found in Switzerland and Savoy. These settlements seem to be later than the first arrival of the leaf-shaped sword people, and to date from about 1000-900 B.C., though Crawford suggests a later date.

¹ Déchelette, ii. (1), 13-15.

² Compare the illustrations of *épingles à raquette* found in the Koban cemeteries and illustrated in Chantre (1886), II. (Atlas), Pl. xix. 1 and 2, with those from a cemetery at Gaya in Moravia, figured in Déchelette, II., i. 317, Fig. 122, 5, 6, 7, after Virchow (1890), 173, Fig. 2, a-c. See also Lissauer (1904), 573-585.

³ Morgan (1889).

⁴ Gowland (1912), 281, 285.

this new discovery spread in time to the mouth of the Danube, not very far from which a similar ore was found,¹ and later on to the Save valley,² where ore is abundant and is worked at the present day. Armed with these new weapons the Nordic lords of the Hungarian plain attacked their neighbours in the mountain regions to the west, and burnt their lake dwellings; the people thus expelled fled to France, and some reached this country, while others passed over into Ireland.

A few years later a further exodus occurred. Some men of the iron sword crossed the Predel pass³ into the Friuli and invaded the Po valley, driving southwards towards Latium the Beaker-folk who had constructed their *terre mare* by the streams there,⁴ and later displaced some leaf-shaped sword people who had settled near Lake Fucino. Others had earlier passed through Illyria into Greece,⁵ where we hear of them as the returning Heraclids. Others again entered France through the Belfort gap,⁶ conquered the valley of the Saone, and turned southwards towards the mouth of the Rhone. None of these marauders seem to have reached these isles, and thus it was that Britain did not learn the use of iron until some centuries after it was known in most parts of the continent.

¹ At Gyalar in Transylvania. Gowland (1899), 319; cf. J.I.S.I. (1897), lii. 205.

² J.I.S.I., lii. (1897), 205.

³ Cemeteries of these people have been excavated at Sta. Lucia, Tolmino, in the Isonzo Valley, and at Cividale in the Friuli.

⁴ For a description of these see Peet (1909), 331-371.

⁵ Ridgeway (1901). See also Casson (1921), 39.

⁶ Déchelette, II., ii., carte ii.

CHAPTER VI

THE VILLAGE COMMUNITY IN BRITAIN

WE have examined the broad features of the history of Europe from neolithic days to the dawn of what are known as Historic Times, and have followed the movements of peoples and the course of trade ; we must now see how these events influenced the British Isles. In neolithic times dense forests covered a large part of the country as they did elsewhere in North Europe. It has been suggested that most of the land below the 500 foot contour was wooded,¹ but this generalisation, though doubtless true in the main, needs some qualifications. There is much reason for believing that in Wales, and the west generally, the timber line did not extend much beyond the 500 foot line, and there were few if any open patches below that level, except on the sea coast, and so it is natural to find most remains of early man on the high moorlands or in little fishing communities by the shore. In England, however, especially in the south and east, timber would grow at a higher level where the soil was suitable, as was the case on the Chiltern Hills, where the chalk is overlaid with boulder-clay. On the other hand, there were, even at lower levels, large areas of chalk and limestone, covered only with a shallow soil, which was unsuited to the growth of trees, and these were covered with grass and perhaps a few stunted shrubs. Besides these areas there were also in the south large tracts of plateau gravels, which were then, as often now, bare open heaths, and many patches of gravels and sands on the lower ground, often by the sides of rivers, which would have been almost if not absolutely destitute of trees.

¹ Fleure and James (1916), *op. cit.* 122 and seqq.

Large marshes would have occurred in many parts, where the natural drainage was unable to carry away the rainfall with sufficient rapidity. Many of the rivers were full of gravel laid down irregularly by the torrential flow from melting glaciers in the later ice-age, and gravel banks would have impeded the flow of their streams, leaving them in many cases a chain of shallow lakes. A further element would have increased the number of such lakes. Even as late as Saxon times we have evidence of the presence in this country of the beaver,¹ whose custom it

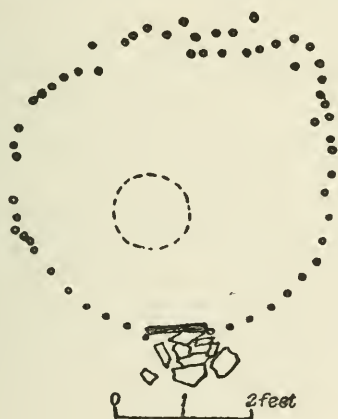


FIGURE III

PLAN OF A HOUSE IN GLASTONBURY LAKE VILLAGE

is to dam streams that he may build his huts in the shallow lakes thus formed; evidence of such dams and the consequent lakes may be seen at many places, especially in the Kennet Valley near Newbury.² Such shallow

¹ This is attested by such place names as Beverley. The beaver seems to have survived in Wales, in the river Teivy, as late as the twelfth century. Girald, *Cambr. Itin.*, ch. iii. "A Beaver's island" is mentioned among the bounds of Brimpton, Berks., in A.D. 944. *Chron. Monast. Abingd.*, i. 118.

² Very clear signs of the remains of a beaver dam may be seen opposite to Marsh Benham, where there is a raised causeway of shell-malm, overlying the peat, running almost across the valley. At various other spots in the valley of the Kennet patches of the same substance are found, lying partly across the valley. This shell-malm seems to be composed of the accumulation of broken shells and other debris floating in the river

lakes silted up gradually with vegetable deposits, which later, in many cases, became converted into peat, and the presence of bronze implements in the peat of the Kennet Valley shows us that this deposit was being formed in the bronze age.¹

Thus large areas of the British Isles were at that time essentially lands of forest and marsh, and so uninhabitable by a people in a low state of culture, and the only open spaces of any importance were the hills and moorlands of Wales and the north-west above the 500 foot contour, the limestone hills of the Derbyshire region and perhaps Cannock Chase, the southern margin of the Fens and the northern slopes of the Chilterns, and Salisbury Plain with extensions into Dorset, Hampshire and Berkshire. Besides these there were some open spaces on the chalk hills of Yorkshire, Kent and Sussex, and on the plateau gravels of the Thames and Hampshire basins.²

These regions were inhabited by men of the Mediterranean Race, who had advanced hither across Western France, and with them, perhaps, were certain descendants of those undifferentiated long-headed men who had occupied the land in late palæolithic times. These people occupied the open spaces, where remains of their settlements are still found, and here they lived on the Downs and moorlands in simple pastoral communities, herding their sheep, cattle and goats. It has been said that they also possessed the horse,³ but this statement

or lakes, and is usually found along the banks; when, however, it is found across the valley it seems to imply the existence of some barrier upon which it could accumulate. Such a barrier may have been formed by a raised bed of gravel, but when, as sometimes occurs, the shell-malm lies on the peat, the inference is that some other barrier, such as a beaver-dam, has caused the accumulation. A case in point is the occurrence of shell-malm over peat in Northbrook Street, Newbury, and the discovery a few years ago by Dr. M. C. Rayner and Mr. W. Nielson Jones of a bone, which was identified by Dr. F. J. Cole as the pelvis of a young beaver; this was found a few yards upstream, but near the deposit. This discovery appears to confirm the view advanced above.

¹ "A History of Newbury," etc. (1839), 142.

² Crawford (1912), 185-188.

³ Teeth and perhaps bones of horses have been found in several Long Barrows, e.g., Nempnet, Rodmarton, Charlton Abbots and Woodchester. Arch XLII. (1869), 229, but these may have been used for food; remains of bones of horses are also stated to

rests upon the evidence of one site alone, and as this site produced evidence of certain cultural details not found elsewhere at this date, it is more than possible that this settlement, though no metal objects have been found there, dates in reality from a later time when metal was well known, though possibly a scarce commodity among poor and out of the way communities.

It is probable that these moorland communities had some form of social organisation, but it is difficult to say what it would have been like, for no such Mediterranean community has survived, unaffected by later invaders, down to historic times.

It was about 2800 B.C. or perhaps earlier that the Prospectors of whom I have spoken in an earlier chapter started out from the Ægean for the west in search of copper. This they found in south-east Spain, and with it a small amount of tin ore. The tin ore they smelted with the copper, perhaps by accident, and thus produced a poor bronze, which, however, was much harder than the copper they had used before; this, no doubt, enabled them to find a better market for their goods in the Levant. By degrees they ascertained the cause of this improvement, experiments proved to them the percentage of tin that gave the best results, and so the true Bronze Age was ushered in, though doubtless the knowledge of the alloy remained for long a trade secret of the Prospectors.¹

But tin ore is not abundant in the south-east of Spain, and the Prospectors set out to find richer supplies elsewhere. This they found in the north-west of the peninsula, and also in the south of Brittany, where they

have been found at Perthi Chwareu, in Denbighshire, Dawkins (1874), 166, and at Dog Holes Cave, Warton, Lancs., Jackson (J. W.), in Lancs. and Chesh. Antiq. Soc., xxx. (1912), 99 and seqq. But in these cases, too, the horses may have been used as food, or it may be that, in spite of the absence of metal, these sites do not date from neolithic times—but on this point *vid. infr.*

¹ It seems probable that such an important discovery would be kept a secret, and would, as was the case with most of such secrets, be preserved by a priesthood as part of the secret knowledge of their religion. I have suggested that it was, perhaps, this knowledge which gave rise to the mysterious cult of the Cabiri. Cf. Man. XVI. 68.

also washed gold in the sands at the river's mouth.¹ The appearance here of gold seems to have led them to search still further afield for the precious metal, and well before 2000 B.C. they seem to have reached Ireland, and worked the alluvial gold fields in the Wicklow Hills.² Others, perhaps earlier, had penetrated the Baltic in search of amber, a commodity much prized in the Mediterranean, not only for its beauty, but as a charm.³ The arrival of the Prospectors in the south of Sweden seems to have synchronised with the arrival of the Nordic invaders from the south shore of the Baltic, thereby causing what is called the megalithic culture of Scandinavia to be attributed to the Nordic Race.⁴

Wherever they went these Prospectors seem to have introduced the custom of erecting structures of large unhewn stones, or of smaller stones laid dry without mortar. This megalithic culture, as it is called, is found in Sweden, Denmark and throughout large parts of west Europe and in many isolated spots in the Mediterranean.⁵ It is also found in the western parts of Great Britain and more particularly in Ireland. At nearly all the spots where such structures are most common we find the presence of this dark rather broad-headed type,⁶ and it has been pointed out that the megaliths are found in just those areas where the metals, gold, copper and tin, or

¹ Siret (1908), 129-165, (1909) 129-166, 283-328, (1910) 281-312.

² The evidence for the early Irish gold trade has been summarised by Coffey (1895), 23. Further evidence, and a summary of the notices up to date, are given by Crawford (1912), 194.

³ Hildburgh (1906), 464-5; (1908), 208-9. See also Elliot-Smith (1919), 37 and seqq., and Smith (W. Robertson) (1889), 133.

⁴ There are still those who hold the view that Megalithic culture arose in Scandinavia and thence spread to the west and south. But opinion is tending in favour of the view that it arose in the eastern Mediterranean, and thence spread round western Europe as far as the Baltic. It would seem probable that it first reached Denmark and the south-western shore of the Baltic, where it was adopted by men of the Nordic Race already settled there, and was, perhaps, by them introduced into the south of Sweden.

⁵ Especially in Sardinia, Malta and near Taranto in South Italy; the caves of Sicily seem also to be associated with this culture, but see Peet (1912). This author says (p. 90) that monuments of this type exist in Tripoli, but this is denied by other authors, who have shown that the supposed trilithons there are the remains of Roman oil-presses.

⁶ Fleure and James (1916), 137-140.

such precious commodities as amber occur.¹ This last statement is, however, not strictly accurate, for rude stone monuments of this type are to be seen at spots where none of these objects are found to be. But these exceptions do not really invalidate the conclusion, for they are either on islands, such as Malta, which would be useful as ports of call, or in regions like Salisbury Plain, where a number of land routes to the mining areas cross one another.² The connection, therefore, between the Prospectors, the Megalithic culture and ancient mining or trade seems fairly well established.

It has been urged against this view that many of these megalithic monuments date from the neolithic age when metal was unknown.³ That this view has hitherto been held is undoubted, but recent inquiries make us very chary of assuming a neolithic date, merely because no metal has been found. For this reason a primitive settlement at Harlyn Bay in Cornwall was long considered to be neolithic, but subsequently fragments of brooches were found which proved that it dated from the century immediately preceding the arrival of the Romans.⁴ This may yet turn out to be true of the settlement at Perthi Chwareu in North Wales⁵ and of the remains recovered from the sea shore at Great Meols on the Wirral peninsula,⁶ both of which have been hitherto believed to be neolithic. Again, because no metal objects have been found in the Long Barrows, many of which contain megalithic chambers, we must not too readily assume that when they were constructed metal was totally unknown here ; all we can assume is that metal objects were

¹ Perry (1915).

² Belloc (1904), 11. On Salisbury Plain the various roads from the Channel ports to North Wales, *en route* for Ireland, converge, and are crossed by those coming from the Thames estuary and the Wash, and aiming at the tin-mining areas of Devon and Cornwall.

³ Ruggeri (1918), 97.

⁴ Bullen (1902) and (1912).

⁵ Dawkins (1874), 166 : Arch. Camb. IV., iii. (1872), 22 ; VI., xii. (1912), 66.

⁶ Hume (1863).

scarce, and that it was not the custom to bury them with the dead. The same arguments apply to Malta and other Mediterranean sites. Until recently no objects of the Bronze Age had been found in Malta, and it was conjectured that the island had passed direct from a neolithic to an iron-using state. Lately a hoard of implements has been found, dating from some centuries after metal was first known in this part of the Mediterranean; the circumstances of the discovery show that when deposited, probably between 2000 and 1900 B.C., the megalithic temple in which they were found had been unused for some years.¹ This does not prove, however, that the people who introduced this culture into Malta were unacquainted with metal, even if the Maltese remained without it for many centuries. The more our knowledge of these early times progresses the less do we seem to know of strictly neolithic times in Britain. Every year late palæolithic culture seems to be brought down to a later date,² while the first knowledge of metal is thrown back earlier; the British neolithic age seems threatened with extinction between them.

We see, then, that at an early date, probably before rather than after 2000 B.C., the Prospectors arrived in Ireland to exploit the Wicklow gold fields, and it seems probable that then or later they explored parts of Wales with the same object in view, though whether they discovered the scantier deposits in the principality is not yet certain. Either others of the same type, or perhaps some Nordics arrived here a little later from Sweden, some, perhaps, sailing round the north of Scotland, but most of them landing on the east coast of Great Britain and crossing the island to ports in the west.³

¹ Arch. lxvii. 127-144; lxviii. 263-284.

² Report on the Excavations at Grimes Graves, P.S.E.A. (1915); see also the author's review of this in "The Antiquary," New Ser., XI. 375-8.

³ Peake (1911), 31-45. It has been objected to this view that no traders would have crossed the island, and exposed themselves to the danger of being robbed by the inhabitants, if they could have performed all the journey by sea. But the evidence as to the distribution of early metal implements adduced by Crawford (1912), and the

While the prospectors exerted a great influence on the advance of civilisation in this country, they do not appear to have affected the organisation of village life, though it is of course possible that they introduced the knowledge of agriculture.

About the time that the Prospectors were arriving in the west the Beaker-folk were appearing in the east. Driven by advancing steppe-folk from the northern foothills of the Carpathians and from Bohemia, they made their way northwards to Holland and Denmark,¹ accompanied in some cases by a few people of pure Alpine type. Many landed on the east coast of England, between the Thames and the Humber, still more further north between the Humber and the Moray Frith.² Whether others landed on the south coast as far west as Dorset is uncertain, for though they settled on the Downs behind Weymouth, they may perhaps have reached there overland from the Wash.³ Those who reached Aberdeenshire were mostly of pure Alpine type, and have left a decided mark upon the present population of that county.⁴

These Beaker-makers seem to have settled upon the open spaces among the Mediterranean people, and probably introduced to them the art of husbandry, for if we are right in thinking that they were a remnant of the Tripolje people, they had tilled the ground in the Ukraine. They seem to have been without metal when they landed, for they had been traversing the plain of

discovery of numbers of metal implements of early types, and stone weapons of Scandinavian form, at spots, such as Warrington, which would be suitable ports for Ireland. leaves us no option but to conclude that overland journeys were made.

¹ Abercromby (1912), i. 16. See also Crawford (1912).

² *Ibid.*

³ It is possible that they advanced by the Icknield Way, or rather by the earlier Ridgeway. The name Icknield Way is still attached to a road of the ridgeway type during part of its course, but south of the Thames the upper road is known as the "Ridgeway," and the lower road as the "Icknield Way," and this distinction can be traced to Saxon times. Many remains of the Beaker-folk have been found on and near the Ridgeway in Berkshire and Wiltshire.

⁴ Gray and Tocher (1900).

North Germany, where the population appears still to have been living in a neolithic state. That this is so seems clear from the fact that the few bronze objects found with their interments resemble those found in Spain, and are quite unlike those of Central or North Europe.¹ But to say that on their arrival they were absolutely ignorant of metal might be an exaggeration, for copper tools had been known, though probably not made, in the Tripolje region at a slightly earlier date.²

As the prospectors were dominating the west the Beaker-makers settled more in the east, though in some areas both cultures are found overlapping, and a few of them penetrated as far west as Devon and the Welsh coast; it is doubtful whether any crossed to Ireland.³ Having been accustomed to some form of organised community life in their former home, it is probable that they made an attempt to introduce some similar system among the Mediterranean aborigines of this country, among whom they introduced the custom of tilling the land.

It seems probable that it is largely to the initiative of the Beaker-folk that we owe the type of settlement that we will call the Moorland Village Community, though the germ of it must have existed among the Mediterranean shepherds whom they found here. It was mainly a pastoral community though small patches of grain were cultivated with the hoe on the terraced slopes of the hills. The down or moor land was divided among the communities, each having an area a few miles in length stretching down to the rivers or streams, or at any rate to the forest or marsh on either side. The patches of grain were raised on the margins of this open space, just on the borders of the woodland, and in some cases these were changed every year and the land allowed to return

¹ Abercromby (1912).

² *vid. supr.* p. 67.

³ Abercromby (1912), i. 38, 39; Crawford (1912).

to pasture.¹ In the chalk lands, however, judging by the extent of the terracing, the grain patches were more permanent than in the west, probably because the ground here could bear cereal crops for many years in succession without impoverishing the soil. This type of community seems to have existed, with but little variation, throughout the greater part of the British Isles during the last phase of the neolithic age and through most of the bronze age; it continued in the west, with but few changes, well into historic times,² but the arrival of a new people seems to have caused a change to take place throughout a large part of England.

We have seen that a little before 1200 B.C. the men of the leaf-shaped sword, who were probably the Nordic lords of Central Europe, accompanied in all probability by henchmen of Alpine or mixed blood, set out in various directions to dominate a large part of Europe. That they reached this country by 1150 B.C. seems certain, as there is but little difference between the type of sword that they used here and that which they used elsewhere. As we have seen, they, or to speak more accurately their followers, were agriculturists, who had been accustomed in their Central European home to a well organised community, consisting of peasants who cultivated their fields in common under a lord who governed them and protected them from their enemies. That these peasants followed their lords here as to France, the number of bronze sickles testify, and that, in some cases at any rate, they had substituted the plough for the hoe, may be concluded from the discovery of one or two plough-shares of bronze.³ We have ample evidence that they had bronze axes in plenty, of the types known as palstaves and socketed celts, and with these they seem to have begun to clear the hill-sides and valley bottoms, that they might have water-meadows such as they had been

¹ Seebohm (1890), 192, 227, 244, 251, 412.

² *Ibid.*, 189-213.

³ Sheppard (1917), 157.

accustomed to by the sides of the lakes and rivers of Central Europe.¹

As has been noted above,² the bulk of these Alpine followers seems to have arrived between 1000 and 900 B.C., and it is, perhaps, to this date that we should attribute the first formation of some of the Valley Villages. Though a considerable number of tools have been found on low-lying sites, no actual remains of a settlement of this date have been discovered, so that we cannot describe the type of house used, or the nature of the village plan. On the other hand we have evidence that Moorland villages were still in existence, for on Cranborne Chase, General Pitt-Rivers found settlements of this date at South Lodge Camp by Rushmore Park,³ at Handley Hill,⁴ and at Martin Down Camp.⁵ In each case the village was quadrangular, in some cases lozenge-shaped, and was surrounded by a bank with a ditch outside, with a single entrance on one side, not, however, in the exact centre. There was no evidence to show the shape or arrangement of the houses, but the almost complete absence of pits seems to point to the fact that the huts were erected entirely above ground. These villages seem to date from about 1000 B.C. and continued in use until and throughout the Roman occupation of this country, since great quantities of Romano-British potsherds were found in the upper layers of the silting of the ditches.

Many of the invaders with the leaf-shaped swords sailed up the Thames and landed at Chelsea, Brentford,⁶

¹ Axes of early types are rare, though there is reason for supposing that they remained in use for relatively long periods; on the other hand palstaves and socketed celts have been found much more abundantly, showing that metal had by this time become more generally used.

² P. 73, f-n. 4.

³ Pitt-Rivers (1887-98), iv., 1-42.

⁴ *Ibid*, iv., 46-57.

⁵ *Ibid*, iv., 185-190.

⁶ The number of leaf-shaped swords found in the Battersea reach of the Thames, and by Old England at Brentford, is very considerable. Many of those from the latter site may be seen at the Brentford Public Library, which possesses the collection formed by the late Thomas Layton.

and elsewhere, not without opposition if we may judge from the number of sword blades found at these spots. It is probable, too, that they landed also at other points on the east coast, but the scarcity of these sword blades in the south and west seems to indicate that they did not sail down the English Channel. They soon dominated the east of England and Scotland, and made themselves masters of many of the Moorland settlements; they pushed on, too, towards Wales, especially for the upper Severn Valley and the Bala cleft,¹ and it is clear that amongst other things Irish gold was their lure, for swords of this type have been found abundantly in that island.² In the south-west only was their progress slow, for here perhaps the Prospectors still dominated, or perhaps the Beaker-folk had organised powerful resistance on Salisbury Plain. Certain it is that in the southern and south-western counties swords of this type are far less commonly found, although a type of rapier-like dirk, which came into use somewhat earlier, is by no means rare. Eventually, however, they conquered the whole of England, except perhaps part of the mountainous regions of the west, and dominated the upper Severn Valley and those parts of Wales which gave access to Ireland.³

It seems probable, as we have seen, that it was under the influence of these men of the leaf-shaped sword that the villages began to leave the down-lands for the valley-bottoms, where they would be nearer to their meadows and their water supply. The process was probably gradual, as it would be a lengthy task to clear the forest

¹ Remains of leaf-shaped sword culture were found at Guilsfield, in Montgomeryshire (*Arch. Camb.*, III., x. (1864), 214; *Montgom. Coll.*, iii., 437). A fine sword of this type was found many years ago at Val Hill, in the Township of Tetchill, in the Parish of Ellesmere, Shropshire, and is now in the Ellesmere Museum, and another has been found between Dolgelly and Barmouth (*Arch. Camb.*, III., x. (1864), 214).

² Evans (1881), 291.

³ It is very much to be desired that a list and map should be made of the leaf-shaped swords found in the British Isles; if the different types were distinguished, it should be possible to trace the gradual occupation of the country by these invaders. That such conclusions can be drawn from this method of inquiry can be seen from Peake (1914), 57-64.

and marshy scrub. The old moorland communities appear to have been divided into ten or twelve groups, each eventually with its lord, and each of these made a valley settlement in the adjoining valleys, with the waste running into the old moorland pasture. The villages would be placed on some dry spot near the stream or some backwater, the alluvium would be apportioned out between them for water-meadow, and by degrees they cleared the hard ground adjoining for the three common fields, to which they had been accustomed in their old home in Central Europe. Thus does it come about that the three-field system is common to our valley villages, and to those in the upper Danube basin. This is the only invasion of these islands which can be shown to have come from that area, and that it was an invasion of agriculturists is clear from the abundance of sickles which then made their appearance, as well as from the occasional appearance of a ploughshare of bronze.¹

Though the villages had moved to the lowlands, the sheep and cattle would still be pastured on the higher ground, and the flocks and herds of all the villages which had come from one moorland community would feed in common on the same patch of down or heath. It would be necessary to organise periodic meetings of the villagers to brand cattle and to decide on the ownership of calves, besides rounding up the beasts in the autumn prior to driving them down to the stalls in the village, near the supply of hay.² Such gatherings would become opportunities for discussing joint action of all kinds, and of settling disputes between people of different villages, and in these periodic meetings we may see the germ of what was afterwards known as the Hundred Moot. It

¹ Sheppard (1917). Corroborative evidence, supporting the view that the common field system was introduced by the men of the leaf-shaped swords, may be found in certain distinctions between the islands of Guernsey and Alderney. In the former no traces of these swords, or of the culture usually associated with them, have been found, while such remains are plentiful in the latter; common fields seem to have been unknown in Guernsey, while vestiges of this system can still be discerned in Alderney.

² Such meetings still take place where there is much open heath land, and they are usual in ranching areas in the New World.

is probable, too, that many of the later hundreds, as we find them in the Domesday Survey, were actually the areas once occupied by the primitive moorland communities, for it was not uncommon at that time, and for that matter at the present day also, for a hundred to be named after some out of the way spot on the waste of a township, in the centre of an area of moor or downland.¹

In Wales, as it is a mountainous region, the rivers run more rapidly to the sea, the valleys are narrower and more deeply cut, and as a consequence of this there is little or no alluvium. This is true of all parts of Wales except the upper Valley of the Severn, and is equally true of Devon and Cornwall and other regions in the west and north of the country. Here the sides of the valleys are more precipitous and as a rule densely wooded, and much of the soil is less capable of cultivation than that of the English Plain. It is uncertain whether the leaf-shaped sword people settled in these mountainous regions; that they penetrated these areas on their way to the Irish gold fields is clear from the remains that they have left behind, but the fact that most of the swords hitherto found were discovered on the Welsh coast, seems to show that they came as birds of passage rather than as settlers, except in the upper Severn Valley, but until the different types of weapons found in the Principality have been catalogued, it would be unwise to dogmatise upon this point.

As the cultivation of grain was introduced into these mountain regions, the members of the moorland communities began to descend the slopes, but instead of ten or twelve groups going down to the valley bottom to cultivate the meadows, family groups in single households erected houses, called Tyddyn, half-way down the slopes. These groups consisted frequently of a batch of brothers or cousins, but composed only one large household, and on the shelves above the steep declivities that led down to the rivers they cultivated small patches

Gomme (1880), 105-8; Kemble (1849), i. 75; Grant Allen (1884), 45, 46.

of land, allowing five *erws* or acres to each adult member of the household. These Tyddyns remained family households and did not develop into village communities. Pastoral life still remained more important than agriculture, so that the old community continued as the principal unit and was considered as the Township or *Tref*. Several of these were at a later date, perhaps under Roman influence, banded together as a *Cantref*.¹ Thus, though the *Tref* is considered as the equivalent of the English Township, and for certain purposes may be so regarded, it seems probable that in many respects it more closely resembles the Hundred. The *Tref* and the Hundred were both pastoral units, the Township was an agricultural unit and in this respect is better represented by the Tyddyn.

The land system in Wales needs a closer inquiry than it has yet received, and this requires to be carried out on a geographical as well as on a historical basis. Mr. Seebohm's excellent statement of the case lacks this geographical aspect, which can only be supplied by detailed investigations on the spot, and is further vitiated by a too complete reliance on certain documents, which are said by some Celtic scholars to be of a much later date than tradition claims for them.²

Contrary to the generally accepted view, I am inclined to believe that the introduction of iron into this country was not accompanied by the arrival of fresh invaders, but was the result only of commercial intercourse.³ Recent investigations at Hengistbury seem to show that the south and south-west of England was trading in the seventh century B.C., with the south-west of France,

¹ Seebohm (1890), 200.

² A certain amount of work of a geographical nature is contained in Palmer and Owen (1910), but this inquiry is confined to an area in West Denbighshire, which has been since the time of Offa under English influence, and which, for the most part, resembles England rather than Wales in its geographical features. Professor J. Glyn Davies tells me that the Venedotian Code contains Norman and perhaps English elements, and appears to be a late imitation of archaic Welsh; also that the legal triads, on which Seebohm relied, were made up in the seventeenth century.

³ Holmes (1907), 232.

where iron was then well known,¹ while the presence of bronze axes of a Breton type in the west and as far east as Wiltshire, Berkshire, and Oxfordshire,² shows that close relations existed at that time between this country and Armorica, in which, however, iron was not extensively used. That this Breton trade continued until the advent of the Romans is clear from the results obtained during the excavations of the lake village at Glastonbury.³

But in the south-east of England there were newcomers in the iron age, though not during its earlier phases. We find in this region pottery and other remains which have close affinities with the culture of north-eastern Gaul,⁴ and it is clear that in these we must recognise evidence of the arrival of those Belgic tribes, whose advent is noted by Roman authors. These newcomers seem to have settled in Kent, Sussex, Surrey and Hampshire, and at a later date in Berkshire. The type of village in these counties does not differ materially from that met with in many other parts of the country, and so we cannot credit the Belgic tribes with the introduction of a fresh model. They were probably descendants of the men who destroyed the lake dwellings.⁵ They had first of all penetrated France, and had passed from thence in a north-easterly direction down the valleys of the Meuse and Moselle; later they had invaded the part of Gaul to which they gave their name. Doubtless Belgic lords replaced the older stock, but there is no reason for believing that they introduced a new type of village community.

¹ Bushe-Fox (1915). Still later excavations at All Cannings, Wiltshire, where similar pottery has been found associated with a *fibula* of La Tène I., seem to point to a date for the Hengistbury settlement somewhat later than 500 B.C.

² Socketed celts of Breton type have been found at several sites in Wiltshire, at Lambourne and Levertton in Berkshire, and at Magdalene Bridge, Oxford.

³ Bulleid and Gray (1911 and 1917).

⁴ Evans (A.), in Arch. LII. (1890), 387, 8; Arch. Rev. II. (1889), 324; Arch. Oxon. (1892-5), 159-60.

⁵ If Beddoe and others are right in identifying the Belgæ with the tall fair people with rather broad heads, they must have been a cross between the Nordic and the Alpine.

Thus we have reason for believing that before the arrival of the Romans the agricultural village community was in existence in the greater part of the English plain,¹ and perhaps still further afield, while a type which still retained much of its pastoral character remained in Wales and in many other regions in the north and west.

Where the agricultural communities existed the lord had established his sway, while it is possible that the pastoral communities were still under the rule of a patriarch with a council of elders.²

It is very doubtful whether the Forest Village had yet arisen. A few clearings may have been made in the woodlands of the Midland Plain, but the paucity of pre-Roman remains in this area suggests that its occupation was limited to a number of trade routes, and a few trading posts at their intersection.³

In many parts of England the Forest Village is associated with a one-field system, or a two-field system which grew out of it. This may be true of all, but hitherto this type of community has received little study, and an investigation of the case is hampered by the fact that the majority of such villages had their lands enclosed at an early date, and so it is difficult, and in many cases impossible, to restore their original form.

Now the one-field system is that which prevails generally in the plain of North Germany,⁴ and it seems reasonable to suppose that it was introduced into this country from that region. It is true that the Belgic tribes are believed to have come from that direction, but the area of Britain which they occupied is not conspicuous for one-field villages, and such as there are seem, as we shall see, to

¹ Seebohm (1890), 437, 8; on the other hand Vinogradoff (1905), 16, 17, doubts this, though he seems inclined to treat it as an open question.

² This seems implied by the later Welsh laws—Seebohm (1890), 245; Vinogradoff (1905), 15-36.

³ How few remains have hitherto been discovered in this area will be seen by consulting the Maps in Crawford (1912), and Peake (1911), or the chapters on Early Man in the Victoria Histories of the Midland Counties.

⁴ Seebohm (1890), 372, 3.

be of late origin. On the whole, then, it seems probable that the Forest Village is the creation of the Saxon invaders, and not even of the earliest of those people to arrive here, but this question will be dealt with more fully in a subsequent chapter.

We cannot assume that during the Early Iron Age all the inhabitants had left their Moorland Villages for those in the valleys; in fact, we know that this was not the case, but that some of the upland settlements remained during Roman times, and not a few still survive. Up to the present very few settlements of the Early Iron Age have been discovered or explored in this country, excepting the hill-top camps. According to Dr. Grundy, these were "permanent centres of population—the 'cities' of a pre-Roman period."¹ There is no doubt that these camps were occupied, perhaps permanently, during this period, but the remains found in them do not suggest that their inhabitants were numerous or particularly rich. On the other hand evidences of Romano-British settlements have occasionally been found in the lowlands, and "finds" of Romano-British pottery, suggesting a native settlement, are not uncommon near rivers, and have sometimes been found on the sites of existing villages. Owing to intensive cultivation surface signs of such settlements would disappear more readily in the valleys than upon the downs, and if, as I am suggesting, the Valley Villages of the Early Iron Age occupied as a rule the sites of existing villages, we should expect that all signs of them would have disappeared or be buried deep beneath later accumulations.

The only important village sites of the Early Iron Age, which have been fully explored, are those of Glastonbury and Meare; these were built on artificial islands constructed in the Somerset marshes. They seem to be settlements of foreign traders, or perhaps refugees, who came hither from Brittany, and cannot be considered as typical of the British village of the period. The huts

¹ Grundy, 94.

in these villages were mostly of circular plan, about eighteen to thirty-five feet in diameter; the walls were constructed of wattle and daub, the posts being one foot apart, while a central post supported a thatched roof. The floors were of beaten clay, in which was embedded a hearth-stone. The houses were crowded together, and no very clear plan is discernible.¹ The huts in the hill-top camps seem also to have been circular, being merely pits in the ground, covered presumably with a circular thatched roof, but we are not justified in assuming that a rectangular type of building had not yet come into existence. (See Figure III, page 77.)

It is very doubtful whether the Roman occupation had any very marked effect upon the village communities in these islands. Seebohm, it is true, at one time argued that the system found in England was due to them, since the three-field system is found here and in the Romanised areas of South Germany²; but at a later date he modified this view.³ Some of the more formal details which survived in Wales may have been due, as he suggests, to the methods of the Roman tax-gatherer,⁴ but such evidence as he adduced to show that certain details were of pre-Saxon origin are well accounted for if we admit that they were introduced by the men of the leaf-shaped sword.

In many parts of the Roman Empire we find that there were *vici*, or villages, usually with some measure of self-government, and that a group of these formed a *pagus*, the inhabitants of which, the *pagani*, elected officers for certain purposes.⁵ In these divisions we may, I think, see our Valley Villages and the group of villages pasturing in common on a Down or Heath, in fact the area of the original Moorland community and of the later Hundred.

¹ Bulleid and Gray (1911 and 1917).

² Seebohm (1890), 373.

³ Seebohm (1902), 505-7, 518-9.

⁴ Seebohm (1890), 234.

⁵ Vinogradoff (1905), 48, 49.

It was the uniform policy of the Roman government to interfere as little as possible with the religious and social institutions of their conquered provinces.¹ They were familiar with a similar system of communities in Gaul, where it must have been well-nigh universal. It had in all probability been introduced into north Italy by the men of the iron sword,² and would have been usual in Cis-alpine Gaul, and, though probably unknown, at any rate in its northern form, south of Rome, it perhaps existed in the Sabine Hills.³

It may well be that certain Roman citizens, whether retired soldiers or civil servants, acquired lordships from the native British lords, and built villas in the townships, but the position of many of the Roman villas does not suggest this. They are usually built upon what was later the waste, and frequently in townships which suggest Forest rather than Valley communities. A careful examination of all the villa sites known in relation to the nearest communities might, however, help to solve this point.

When the legions left this country the communities were probably in much the same form as when they arrived, though they may sometimes have been grouped differently for purposes of taxation, and their houses may have been of a more ambitious type. Most of the British lords had no doubt become thoroughly Romanised, and the peasants at least partly so.⁴ The sons of the lords, as befitted the scions of a military aristocracy, doubtless received commissions in the Roman army, and would have gone on foreign service to other parts of the empire, often not to return. Such is the constant

¹ Vinogradoff (1905), 45, 46.

² These people, the introducers of the Villanova culture, and possibly of the Umbrian dialects, show in their culture a close resemblance to the men of Hallstatt, cf. Modestov (1907), 287 and seqq.

³ Horace, "Epistles," i. 14 (1-3). There are some reasons for believing that the Sabellian people, of whom the Sabines formed part, were the descendants of the Villanova invaders; they had, however, been preceded in this area by leaf-shaped sword people.

⁴ Haverfield (1912).

fate of the progeny of military castes. When the legions finally departed, few but old men and boys were left, we are told¹; but though this was doubtless true of the aristocratic class, who have always figured largely in the eyes of historians, it is, to say the least of it, very questionable whether the ranks of the peasants had been equally thinned.

¹ Gildas, *Hist. Sec.* 14; Bede, *Eccl. Hist.*, ch. xii.

CHAPTER VII

THE ARRIVAL OF THE SAXONS

It was towards the close of the fourth century of our era that there began another of those secular periods of drought which have had such an important effect upon the course of the world's history. This period seems to have been more intense and longer in duration than the others of which we have any knowledge, and its results were proportionately greater, leading as it did to the downfall of the Roman Empire and the fall of the Sassanian kingdom of Persia.

This drought caused the Mongoloid tribes on the steppe lands of East Russia and Turkestan to become restless, and to expand westwards at the expense of the Sarmatian tribes who then occupied the rest of the Russian plain. Of the early movements of these Mongoloid tribes we know little, but one of them, known at this time as Uigurs, or Huns, were occupying the lower basin of the Volga and the Russian steppe east of the Dnieper in the middle of the fourth century. About this time they defeated and partly absorbed the Alani, who dwelt to the west of that river, and by 375 had come into contact with the Goths, a Germanic people, who ruled a long strip of territory between the Baltic and Black Seas.

The pressure of the Huns drove the Goths westward, so that they attacked the Roman Empire in 378 and during the next few years the emperors were so hard pressed by the invaders that they were compelled to consolidate their forces to defend the heart of the Empire; to do this they had to withdraw their legions from the outlying provinces, and thus leave Britain

undefended. In spite of this the pressure of the Huns still continued, the Germanic tribes were driven further to the west, and early in the fifth century the Franks crossed the Rhine and settled in Flanders.¹

The origin of the Franks is wrapt in some obscurity; their name signifies free men, and they are believed to have been a confederacy of tribes, living east of the Rhine, who banded together in the third century for the sake of plundering their neighbours. As we have seen,

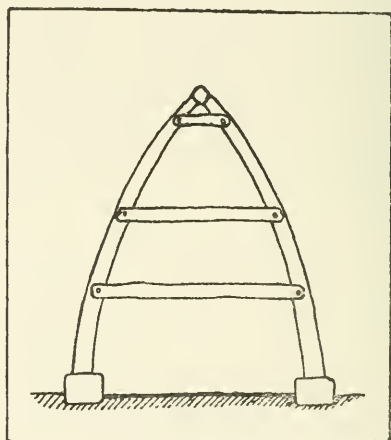


FIGURE IV

SECTION OF A SAXON HOUSE, SHOWING CRUCKS

the plain of North Germany had been occupied by Nordic invaders from the Baltic Region and Alpine intruders from the south, while the present population shows many types of crosses between these two races. The German languages belong to the Teutonic group, which includes also the tongues of the Scandinavian countries, from which the dominant race appears to have come. We shall not be far wrong then in assuming

¹ These movements, known as the Wanderings of the Nations, have been described by many writers, but see especially: Gibbon and Hodgkin (1880-9), (1891), and other works.

that the inhabitants of the German plain at this time consisted of Alpines, with a greater or less infusion of Nordic blood, and all under the rule of Nordic lords, who had imposed their language upon their subjects. It is permissible, too, to suggest that the Franks were a confederacy of Nordic nobles, probably younger sons, grouped together with a military organisation on the frontier, ready to seize any opportunity that might occur to carve out for themselves fresh lordships in the settled areas across the Rhine.

The constant pressure of Sarmatians, or peoples of Slavonic speech, from the east, and the weakening power of the Roman Empire, gave them at length the chance that they had been awaiting, and in 420 they crossed the Rhine and occupied Flanders, while in 486, under Clovis, they began that series of campaigns which left them masters of Gaul, to which they gave their name. Here they established themselves as a noble caste, which survived in comparative purity until the revolution at the close of the eighteenth century.

In 441 Attila and the Huns burst through the German belt and harried the Roman Empire, founding a short-lived kingdom in Hungary, but soon after his death in 453 his followers abandoned this territory and retired again to the banks of the Volga. Meanwhile the westward pressure of the allied Mongoloid tribes continued, and the Slavonic tribes were pressed westward to the Elbe; thus the Teutonic tribes were being squeezed between their advance and the still resisting boundary of the Roman Empire. Towards the close of the fifth century this, as we have seen, gave way, and the Franks invaded Gaul, while other Teutonic tribes followed and over-ran the western empire.

It was about this time that Britain, denuded of the Roman legions and of its own best fighting material, first experienced the invasion of Teutonic tribes. The accounts of some of the earliest attacks are mixed with so many mythical elements that we scarce know what to

believe, while of other invasions, of which archæology, has much to tell us, history is altogether silent. We gather that the chief tribes to invade these shores were the Saxons, Angles, Jutes and Frisians, and that they came from the north-west parts of Germany. The Frisians are believed to have come from Holland and the coast between the mouths of the Rhine and the Elbe, the Saxons lived somewhat to the east of them, and the Angles in Holstein; the Jutes are usually thought to have come from Jutland, but there is reason for supposing that after leaving their original home they had tarried for a time on the banks of the Rhine, near Cologne, before invading Kent and the Isle of Wight.¹ All these tribes came from a bleak flat land, covered with dense woods or undrained marshes, and brought with them the customs of forest-land communities.

The Saxon and other tribes who invaded these islands are usually considered to have been members of the Nordic Race, and by some would be considered typical members; but a careful inspection of the remains discovered in the graveyards of this period will show us that this description is not strictly true of all of them. Among the skeletons unearthed there are a few which conform strictly to the Nordic type—men of great stature, with long, arched heads and powerful jaws; but the majority, though more closely resembling the Nordic type than any other, differ from it in several essential particulars, especially in two: their stature is less, rarely exceeding 5-ft. 8-in. or 5-ft. 9-in., while their heads are decidedly broader at the back, and are of the type called coffin-shaped.

Now, all the Saxon traditions, and their laws too, hint at the existence of a noble caste, sharply distinguished from the proletariat. The pedigrees of their kings are always scrupulously traced to Woden,² and there existed among them certain well-known families such as the

¹ Leeds (1913), 121-138.

² Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, *sub ann.*, 547, 552, 597, 626, etc.

Amals, Balts, Æscings, and the like. Their laws, too, distinguish clearly between two classes, both of them free—the earls or nobles, and the churls or peasants.¹ This distinction seems to run through all their social customs, and thus corroborates the evidence of the graves. We may conclude, therefore, that the invaders were for the most part men of mixed blood, the Nordic element prevailing, and were under the leadership of a small caste of nobles of pure Nordic type.

Most of the evidence of history and tradition, and all the evidence of archæology point to the fact that the invaders sailed up the estuaries and advanced up the rivers, and that their earliest settlements were in the valleys.² Here they seem to have occupied the valley villages, driving out the lord and most of the peasants, and reducing the remainder to servitude. That they married the women of the country seems probable from the evidence found at East Shefford, where Dr. Hooton noticed that with one exception all the older women were of a type different from the men.³ This was true only, one must suspect of the ceorls; the ceorls, with their usual caste exclusiveness probably brought some of their woman-kind with them.⁴

It has hitherto been believed that they were the first to found the valley villages; but, as they came from a land in which the one-field system is the rule, and as the three-field system was in vogue in nearly all the valley villages, we must conclude that they took over a system which they found in working order. The original occupants, then, were either slain or took refuge in the forests and on the downs, where they survived as independent communities for some centuries, while the Saxon noble became lord of the village, or as they termed it the *Gesith*, his henchmen or ceorls succeeded the British

¹ Kemble (1849), i. 122-136, 267-288; Grant Allen (1884), 14.

² Leeds (1913) map p. 19.

³ Peake and Hooton (1915), 104.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 112, 113 (grave No. ix.).

peasants as members of the community and were known as Geneats, either Geburs or Cottiers, according to the size of their holdings, while any of the aborigines who survived among them became slaves or Theows.¹

Some writers have believed that in early days the Saxon village was free, and not subject to a lord. This view was advanced by Maitland, who cited in support of it the account in Domesday of the manor of Orwell, in Cambridgeshire, and other villages, more or less free, in the eastern and northern counties.² That there were some free villages in the eleventh century seems clear, as well as others that retained evidence of having been so once; but as these are all situated in the areas over-run by the Danes, we must attribute this peculiarity to causes which came into operation at a later date. The more usual opinion is that from the beginning the Saxon village consisted of a community of ceorls or freemen under a gesith or lord; certain it is from the Laws of Ethelbert, promulgated about 600,³ that there was a lord in existence, in some villages at least, at that date.

The evidence gained from the distribution of early grave-yards shows us that the first Saxon settlements were confined to the river valleys⁴ and that the woods, heaths and downlands between them were left severely alone. We have seen that the heaths and downs had been occupied in the Bronze Age, and there is evidence that some population was dwelling there as late as Roman times.⁵ To these high grass lands some of the British refugees retired on the arrival of the invaders. We have evidence that some of them remained independent in the high ground north of the Vale of Pewsey, whence they descended in 591 and expelled Ceawlin, the West

¹ Seebohm (1890), 129-134, 144, 164.

² Maitland (1897), 129, 339, 352.

³ Seebohm (1890), 173, 174.

⁴ Leeds (1913), map p. 19.

⁵ Pitt-Rivers (1887-1898) *passim*.

Saxon King. This revolt appears to have lasted several years, until in 597 Ceolwulf re-established his rule.¹

But though the heaths and downs may have been peopled, the evidence of archæology tends to show that the forests and woodlands were still uninhabited. Few Roman or pre-Roman remains have been discovered in these regions, and no Saxon cemeteries have been found there either. Yet, although these woodlands were unpeopled in the sixth and seventh centuries, we have evidence that many of them had become settled by the ninth or tenth. Relating to this time we have a number of charters, which have come down to us in the Chronicles of the Saxon monasteries; for some counties, such as Berkshire, Hampshire, and Wiltshire, they are very numerous. Though we cannot assume that the townships mentioned include all those settled at that time, we notice among those referred to, many that, both from the nature of the soil and the absence of early remains, we may consider to have been wooded areas.

As the Saxon population increased the invaders pushed on westwards, wresting more and more land from the British aborigines; such an extension was absolutely necessary if the Nordic lords were to obtain fresh townships for their younger sons to govern. The country would have been completely conquered at an earlier date, had not the kingdoms of the heptarchy engaged from time to time in internecine strife, thus diminishing the excess of the military caste. But by 800 all England was conquered, while the mountainous country of Wales was not inviting, and by 827 Egbert, King of Wessex, had made himself lord of the whole country, thus bringing inter-tribal wars to an end.

The need for fresh estates for the younger sons still existed, in fact it was for the time accentuated, and it is to this period that I am inclined to attribute the foundation of some at least of the forest villages. Hitherto the Saxons had been occupying villages already established,

¹ Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, *sub ann.*, 591, 593, 597.

with their meadows and three common-fields, but in occupying the forest we find that they rarely if ever established a nucleated village, but settled in scattered homesteads, as had been their custom in the forests of North Germany. Here, too, they adopted the one-field system. It may have been that the ceorls, too, had increased in numbers and needed an outlet, and perhaps some of these also, joined together in bands to make clearings in the forest. If that were so it is possible that they may have established some of those free and lordless villages that Maitland found existing in the time of Edward the Confessor.

Unfortunately the lands redeemed from the forest, though these were the latest to be settled, were the earliest to lose their communal form. The vast majority had their common-fields enclosed before the beginning of the eighteenth century, and so no record has come down to us to give an idea of their organisation. From those which remained till recent years we learn that their fields were known as every year lands, and that these consisted of two fields, an Infield and an Outfield. The Infield was cropped every year with a four-coursed rotation, and was heavily manured each year; the Outfield bore only occasional crops. This system is known to have occurred here and there in the forested areas of the Midland counties, and was not uncommon in Gloucestershire and Oxfordshire. It obtained also in the Lothians and northern counties of England, in Norfolk and some of the eastern counties, but in these areas we may suspect that it was of Danish origin. According to Dr. Gilbert Slater this system of every year lands is a development of the one-field system, which we found was the rule in North Germany, and the lands bordering on the Baltic.¹ The question merits further inquiry, but the evidence available, scanty though it be, seems to show an agreement between the distribution of this type of village and the more wooded regions in the Midlands, as

¹ Slater (1907), 71, 76, 77, 178.

well as with the areas settled by the Danes in the east and north. The natural conclusion is that some of these were founded by the Saxons after their period of conquest had ceased, and that others were founded later by the Danes.

The settlement of England was nearly completed by the time that Ine ruled in Wessex, and we should expect that the valley village system was in full force, when he promulgated his laws about 688. That this was the case has been shown by Seebohm, who cites law 42:¹ "Of a Ceorl's grass-tun." This enacts "If ceorls have common meadow or other land divided into strips to fence, and some have fenced their strip, some have not, and . . . (stray cattle ?) eat their common acres or grass, let those go who own the gap, and compensate the others who have fenced their strip." The existence of the lord is taken for granted, for a further passage in the laws, "of a yard of land," states "If a man agree for a yardland or more at a fixed gafol (rent) and plough it, if the lord desire to raise the land to him to work and to gafol, he need not take it upon him, if the lord do not give him a dwelling."² Here, then, at the close of the seventh century, we have the valley village community, working under its lord, as described in the first chapter.

The valley villages were usually roughly circular or oval in form, consisting of a ring of houses, stables and barns, surrounding an open space, and surrounded, in turn, by a fence. The form adapted itself to the conditions of the site, for it was necessary on the one hand to avoid the alluvium, and on the other not to encroach too far on to the common fields, which seem to have been laid out on a rectangular plan. Sometimes, where the area available was limited, the central open space was very small; at other places, where there was ample room, it was of considerable extent, and has survived as the Village Green. Where the village was near a high-road, it tended

¹ Seebohm (1890), 110.

² *Ibid.*, 142.

to be long and narrow and to extend along the road frontages, but the earliest villages seem to have avoided high roads, and these road villages are often of later date.¹

Occasionally we find villages with a square plan, but these usually occur at high levels on the chalk downs. Fawley in Berkshire, better known as Marygreen, the early home of Jude the Obscure, is such a village, and its squareness reminds one of the Bronze Age villages of Cranborne Chase.

Of the houses we have little direct evidence, and we can only conjecture their form by working back from the known to the unknown.² They seem to have been rectangular, about sixteen feet long, and perhaps about twelve feet wide, with a section like that of a high-pitched roof. They were made by erecting, sixteen feet apart, two pairs of *gaflas* or forks, later known as Croks, Crucks, or Crutches.³ These consisted of two trunks either straight or bent, fastened together at the top by wooden pegs, with their bases extended to the required breadth; across the top of these, to keep them erect, was laid the roof-tree or ridge-pole. (See Figure IV, page 98.)

Such a skeleton is reminiscent of the posts erected for a fly-tent, a form often used by travellers, and the miners and ranchers of the far west. Houses built on such a model occurred in the past all over Europe, and we may conjecture that they have developed from the moveable dwellings of the Steppe-folk, while they still retained their nomadic habits upon the South Russian Plain.

On such a skeleton further poles were laid, both vertically and horizontally, the predecessors of our rafters and purlins, and the space between was filled in with wattle-work and daubed over with moist clay. The door was placed in the end, where the forks or *gaflas* stood, and which has still retained the name of the gable.

¹ Cf. Page (1902), 47-60.

² On this subject cf. Addy (1898).

³ *Ibid.*, p. 17.

The structure resembled the roof of a house without its sides.

By degrees it was found that by using curved trunks for the forks, more head-room could be obtained, and the roof took the same curved form. This, doubtless, gave rise to the idea of the Gothic arch, but we may well believe that it was a development of a later age than that with which we are now concerned.

If I am right in suggesting that the forked hut is derived from the tent of the Steppe-folk, it is probable that it was known in this country at an early date, and had been introduced by the people of the leaf-shaped sword. Until, however, we have more accurate knowledge of the dwellings used during the later stages of the Bronze Age, we cannot be certain on this point.

CHAPTER VIII

THE COMING OF THE VIKINGS

As we have seen, the kingdoms of the Heptarchy were united by Egbert in 827, and for a time the land was at peace. But not for long, for in 855 first appeared a raiding party from Scandinavia, the fore-runner of many which were to vex these shores for nearly two centuries. These raiders were known by various names, such as Northmen, Danes, or Vikings. Whatever the name the men were the same as was their ruthless behaviour. The infiltration of Danish blood into these islands has been considerable, especially in the northern and eastern counties, and before we consider the effect that their arrival had upon the village life of this country, we may well take a survey of their past.

We have seen that certain Nordic invaders entered Scania in South Sweden from the Danish islands about 3000 B.C. Some would place their arrival as early as 3400, though it may well have taken place many centuries later. They were probably an early wave of nomad cattle-men from the Russian steppes, and had, perhaps, during their sojourn in Denmark, mixed with survivors of the tall folk of the kitchen-middens. While in Denmark they appear to have come in contact with some Prospectors, who had arrived there in search of amber, and from them they learnt the practice of erecting megalithic structures. Those, however, who crossed over to Sweden were of pure Nordic type.

On their arrival they found the coast occupied by a short, broad-headed race, apparently of Mongoloid type, but with their usual race exclusiveness they did not mix

with them, but drove them to the north, where they still survive as Lapps. Unlike their relatives who, at a later date, invaded Central Europe, they did not find the land occupied by a settled agricultural people. The Mongoloid people were still in the hunting-fishing state, and so

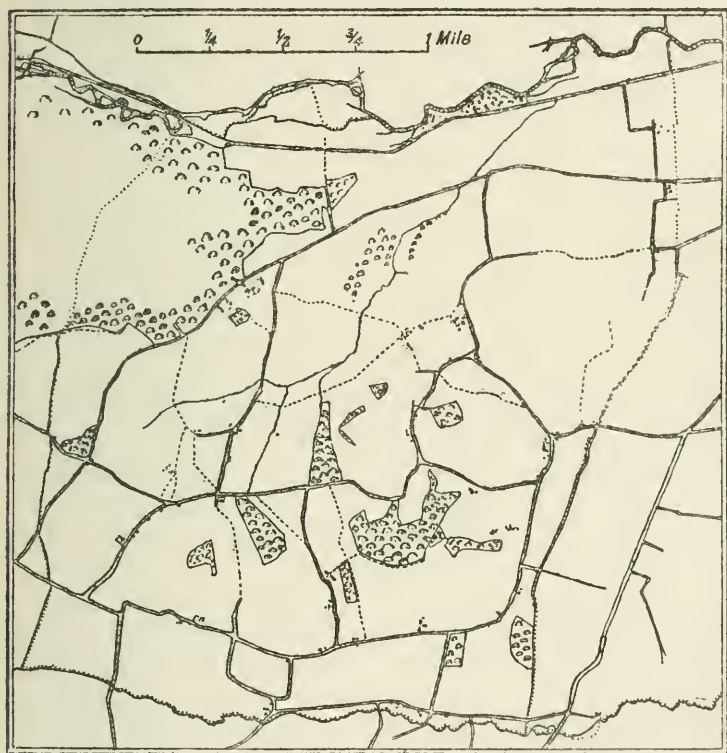


FIGURE V

A FOREST TOWNSHIP IN A VALLEY WITH SCATTERED HOMESTEADS

could not provide them with an industrious peasant population to serve them.¹

The Nordic invaders of Sweden were therefore left to support themselves from their own resources, and for a

¹ See Peake (1919).

long time lived by hunting, supplementing this form of existence by fishing in the Baltic Sea. This gave them an early training in the art of navigation, which in later days they used with such effect. They had brought with them the horse from their old home on the steppe, and though their new surroundings, consisting of pine forests interspersed with lakes and marshes, were not altogether suitable for this prairie animal, they clung to it with tenacity, and rode it, ate it, and almost worshipped it.

A few centuries after their arrival in Sweden some of the Beaker-folk, dispersed from Central Europe, arrived in Jutland, and settled in the interior of the peninsula.¹ It seems probable that from these the Nordics learnt the use of grain, but as they had no subject peasants to cultivate their fields, they were compelled to do the work themselves. Partly because of the marked individuality of their characters, but perhaps also because of the nature of the country, they did not form villages, but each settled in an independent homestead in a forest clearing. Thus no common-fields came into existence, and no village community arose; but each man cultivated his own small patches of grain, and still lived largely on the produce of the chase and the results of his fishing expeditions.

But the leaf-shaped sword people arrived here, too, though they seem to have passed through Jutland without making many settlements. In the Danish islands, however, they appear to have founded villages,² as well as in the southern part of Sweden, while later, if we may judge by their traditions, some of the more adventurous moved northwards to Upsala. Like their compatriots elsewhere, they introduced the custom of cremation, so that it is difficult to say much of the racial type of their followers; but to judge from the evidence supplied by the present population, we should expect these to have been more

¹ Stjerna (1910), Abercromby (1912), map on p. 16, which shows beakers as far north as Holstein.

² *Vid. infr.*

Nordic than the rank and file elsewhere, or perhaps the rigorous nature of the climate eliminated those who did not conform to this type. In this invasion we may, perhaps, see the arrival of Odin and his worshippers, as was suggested some years ago by Chadwick.¹

There is some evidence that in the Danish islands and in the south of Sweden, they introduced a common-field system,² but the question had not yet received the attention which it deserves. It is certain that some of their villages in this area were nucleated, or arranged along a single street, with the houses detached and the tofts or closes adjoining one another.³ To what extent they tilled their lands in common is uncertain, but if they did so, we may be sure that the one-field system was in vogue.

At this time Norway was thinly peopled, for the most part, if not entirely, by the Mongoloid people, who led a precarious existence in the fjords, living mostly on fish. At a later date, it is uncertain when, some of the Prospectors seem to have arrived there, as their blood has influenced the type of the modern population, especially in the region around Bergen.⁴ About 500 B.C., or shortly after, the Nordic men arrived there in great numbers, as is shown by the plentiful remains of their culture at that date,⁵ and it is the descendants of these new arrivals in the fjords that we find exercising such an influence on North Europe in the ninth and tenth centuries.

It was during their sojourn in the fjords that many of the essential characters of this people were formed. Here, more even than in Sweden, the nature of the country compelled them to live in scattered and

¹ Chadwick (1899).

² Vinogradoff (1920), i. 334-336.

³ *Ibid.*, 336, 337.

⁴ It is possible that the presence of dark, broad-headed people around Bergen may be due to a later intrusion, for Bergen was one of the Hansa towns.

⁵ This is well shown in the cases in the Bergen Museum.

sometimes very isolated homesteads, thus increasing the individuality of their temperament and encouraging a spirit of independence in men and women alike. Yet the gregarious spirit, engendered by the far-off steppe life, was, like the horse, retained to some extent, and in spite of the isolation of their dwellings they met at frequent intervals at gatherings, known as "things," and occasionally at still larger assemblies called "all-things," to transact public affairs of common interest.¹

We have no evidence that during these early days they practised piracy, though the presence of articles and ornaments of foreign workmanship shows us that they had dealings with people in other countries. Owing to the poverty of the land in which they had settled, they gained much of their livelihood from the sea, and their adventurous spirit and the love of wandering, engendered in the wide steppes, encouraged them to leave the land-locked fjords and to seek better fishing grounds in the open waters beyond.

But to traverse the stormy seas of the north, large boats were a necessity, and these required an extensive crew. This need gave the opportunity for co-operation denied them by their scattered homesteads. The dangers of the sea produced courage and endurance, also a strong physique, for the weakly would quickly perish from cold under such conditions. Discipline was also a necessity, as lack of obedience might immediately wreck the ship. The need of discipline involved a capable captain, and so it became customary to elect the bravest and most resourceful men as chiefs and to trust them with unlimited powers in times of emergency, though when the danger was past they were liable to render to their fellows an account of their stewardship. Nevertheless the system of hereditary government, inherited from their steppe-folk ancestry, was strong among them; but it became customary, when a chief died, to elect in his place, not necessarily the eldest son, but the most

¹ Du Chaillu (1889), i. 515-524.

capable survivor of his family. Thus we get the germs of an elective monarchy, hereditary as a rule, but by no means always following the laws of primogeniture.

Such were the hardy Norsemen, who in the ninth and tenth centuries became a menace to the lands of northern Europe from the coast of Ireland to the Russian shores of the Baltic. It is believed by some that men of another race sometimes accompanied them, for the Irish Chroniclers recognise two types among them. Some they call *Finngaill*, or "fair strangers," in whom we may recognise the Nordic type, but others they called *Dubhgaill*, or "black strangers,"¹ an expression which has given rise to much discussion. If we assume, however, that Prospectors had already settled by the fjords, and that these sometimes sailed with their fair-haired neighbours in these piratical expeditions, we should have a more probable explanation of the Irish tales than any that have yet been advanced.

It was, as we have seen, in 855 that they first appeared off our coasts, and eleven years later they had made permanent settlements in the eastern counties; in 896 under Rolf the ganger, they entered the mouth of the Seine, seized much of the land on both banks of that river, and became lords of the villages in the province, which from them took the name of Normandy. About the year 870 they conquered and settled in the north-eastern part of England, as far as the line of the Watling Street, and this region was thenceforth known as the Danelagh. Within this area they slew or expelled great numbers of the Saxons, probably all the Saxon lords, and here they established laws and customs similar to those which had obtained in their northern home.

It is by no means easy to assess with accuracy the contribution of the Danes to the English Village community. In the first place we are uncertain to what extent they displaced the existing population, and this is the more difficult to determine as the Saxon and

¹ Beddoe (1912), p. 144; O'Donovan (1856), i. 481, f-n. u.; Todd, p. 18.

Danish types so closely resemble one another. It has been customary to think inaccurately on this problem, and to imagine that British, Roman, Saxon and Danish populations succeeded one another in this country. The evidence of anthropology and the study of the existing population has shown us the fallacy of such crude generalisations, and we must accept with caution the statements of contemporary writers, for if they belonged to the conquered people they were apt to magnify the brutality of the invaders and accuse them of the wholesale slaughter of their compatriots, while the writers on the side of the new comers, when there were any, which was seldom the case, were inclined to ignore the conquered as people of no account, and so to treat them as if they did not exist.

Still, having made all these allowances, we must admit that in many cases the Danes were ruthless invaders, and visited with fire and sword many of the villages that they attacked. This is especially true of their earlier raids, which were mostly confined to the sea coast and the navigable rivers. That many villages in such parts were destroyed and their population slaughtered or driven out is almost certain, though we must be careful not to assume that this was true of the whole of the Danelagh. The inhabitants of the north and east are, with certain marked exceptions, fairer and taller than those of other parts of the country, and have a vigour and independence in strong contrast to the folk of the southern counties who are mainly of Saxon type. This lends support to the view that in some regions, at least, to which the Vikings came, there was a considerable displacement of the existing population.

Though the Danish invaders had not usually been lords of subject communities in their own country, it is probable that they were not adverse to playing this rôle when they came here. They certainly performed the part only too readily in Normandy. We may assume, therefore, with a high degree of probability, that wherever

they settled and did not dispossess the former inhabitants, they nevertheless substituted a Danish for a Saxon lord. Where, however, the village had been destroyed and the villagers slain or exiled, it is likely that the new-comers took to cultivating the soil themselves, for, unlike the previous waves of Nordic intruders, they were not altogether adverse to agricultural labour, as they had not all been spoilt by the possession of an industrious subject class.

We can imagine that these Danish invaders would settle sometimes in scattered homesteads, such as they had been accustomed to in their former home, or, finding the remains of a nucleated village ready to hand, they may have co-operated in the cultivation of its lands, imbued by that corporate spirit which had been engendered by the disciplined life on board ship. We cannot, however, imagine them, with their extreme love of freedom, tolerating a lord in the Saxon sense of the term. They may have elected one of their number to be in some sense their chief, but rather *primus inter pares* than an autocratic lord. It seems more likely that they would have established free villages, such as Maitland¹ has shown us were still surviving in the eastern counties at the time of the Domesday Survey.

It has been suggested above that perhaps the one-field system was introduced by these northern invaders, and at first sight the constant occurrence in East Anglia of villages of this type lends some support to this view. But the one-field village is found also in Oxfordshire and Gloucestershire, where the Danes did not settle, at any rate in considerable numbers; it is also found sporadically in most other parts of the country. Added to this the Vikings do not seem to have had any system of common-fields in their own country, for in most parts of Norway the existence of such fields would have been impossible; it would seem unlikely, then, that they would introduce such a system here.

¹ *vid. sup.* p. 23.

The problem is full of difficulty. One can only suggest that among the invaders there may have been some who came from Holstein, the Danish Isles, or Southern Sweden, which are within the area in which the one-field system was prevalent, and that it was some of these who introduced this system into East Anglia. The majority, however, if not all of the villages of this type seem rather to have been founded by the Saxons, some little time after their arrival, but before they had forgotten the methods in use in their North German home.

As we have seen, most of the Vikings came from Norway where, owing to the nature of the land, scattered homesteads were the rule,¹ but in the Danish islands and in some parts of Sweden true villages existed, the houses, each standing in its own toft, being arranged in rows on either side of a straight village street, giving the whole village a somewhat rectangular appearance.² (See Figure v, page 109.)

The houses were, in general shape and construction much like those of the Saxons' already described, except that already the roof was frequently supported upon low walls, usually, however, of timber. Each house consisted of several isolated rooms, two or three in the case of the poorer folk, many more in the case of the richer. These were, by degrees, joined together by covered passages, and, towards the close of the Viking age, had developed into large houses with several rooms.³

It appears then, that the contributions of the Vikings to the English Village Community were few, if any. Not so their contribution to the national life. The strength and vigour, both of body and mind, which they brought with them is with us to-day, as is their perpetual insistence on personal freedom and their love of adventure, traits, both of them, engendered on the wide

¹ Williams (1920), 15.

² Vinogradoff (1920, i. 336, 337.

³ Williams (1920), 127, 128.

steppes and increased amid the boisterous waves of the northern sea. Their powers of disciplined co-operation, learnt in their long boats, have produced the great co-operative societies, whose principal strength still lies in the northern counties, and the same spirit has led to the formation of trades unions, for it must be remembered that the greatest successes of Joseph Arch were in the eastern counties.

It is to the Danes that we must attribute the great amount of pure Nordic blood that still flows in the veins of thousands of our workers, so that they have never lacked competent leaders from among their own ranks, and it is from them that there arises that sense of discipline to their elected chiefs, which they have usually, though with varying success, been able to impose upon their fellow workers of other types.

In times of national danger they have been the first to respond to their country's call, just as when despotic actions have threatened their liberty they have been the first to rebel. They are prone, sometimes, to raise a riot for its own sake, knowing that in troublous times their physical strength and determination will bring them to the top, but on the whole their sense of discipline leads them to prefer law and order. It is significant, too, that the revolution in Germany, in the autumn of 1918, began at Kiel, on the Baltic, and spread first through the kingdom of Hanover, a province in which, so anthropologists tell us,¹ the Nordic type is more commonly met with than in other parts of the German empire.

¹ Ripley (1900), 217 and seqq.; Parsons (1919), maps on pp. 23, 27

CHAPTER IX

THE SAXON VILLAGE COMMUNITY

HITHERTO we have been tracing the development of the Village Community from evidence supplied by anthropology and prehistoric archæology supplemented by a few scattered historical notices and by the results of researches conducted stage by stage from the known to the unknown. In the tenth century we meet with many documents which give us direct evidence on the condition of the community at that time, and which incidentally explain some of the obscure passages in the rarer documents which preceded them.

The most valuable document for our purpose is one known as the *Rectitudines Singularum Personarum*, which may be rendered as "the services due from various persons." Two copies of this document have come down to us, one in Saxon, dating, it is believed, from the tenth century, the other in Latin and dating from the twelfth. The document has been printed in Thorpe's "Ancient Laws and Institutes of England," and a treatise on the subject by Dr. Heinrich Leo was published at Halle in 1842. Considerable extracts of both versions, with an English translation, are given by Seebohm.¹

It begins by defining the duties of two classes of persons, the *thanes* and the *geneats*, in which we may recognise the lords and peasants of our community. The thane, we are told, if he is to be worthy of his book-rights—that is the rights granted to him by charter—has to do three things for his land: to accompany the king in his military expeditions (*fyrð-faereld*), to aid in the building of castles (*burh-bot*), and to maintain the

¹ Seebohm (1890), 129-147.

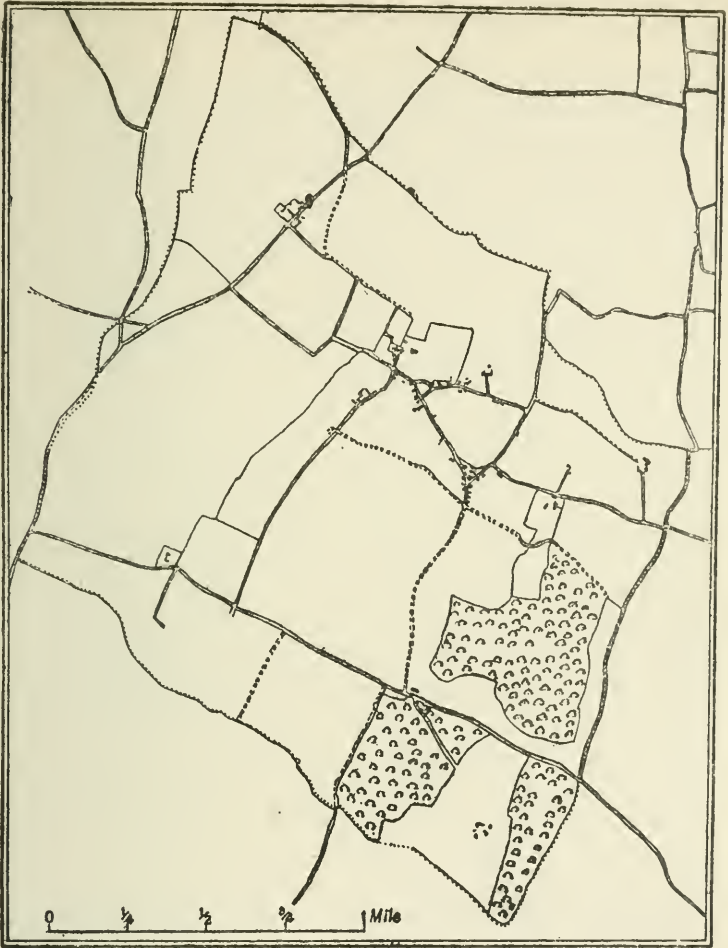


FIGURE VI
A FOREST TOWNSHIP ON A HILL

bridges (*brig-bot*). Though the first of these duties was doubtless performed in person, in the case of the second it seems to have been performed for him by his geneats, for we read concerning the latter that he shall build and hedge the *burh*. It seems certain, too, that he employed others to mend the bridges. Nevertheless, he was responsible to the king for the due execution of these two types of work. Other services were sometimes, but not invariably due, such as deer-hedging on the king's estate, providing apparel for the guard and a number of similar services. These again seem to imply rather the provision of men or material rather than the rendering of personal service. The duties of the thane, were, then, military service, no doubt as an officer, and to supply men and material for national works, and perhaps to superintend their execution.

The thane held a certain amount of land in the township, probably a number of scattered strips, which was called his *inland*, and there are many references in the *Rectitudines* and other documents to thane's inland, and to geneat land or geset land, which describes the acres let or set to the geneat or peasant.

The term *thane* is one that we have not used hitherto, and it may be well to inquire into the connection between the thane and the lord whom we met with in the earlier laws. Thanes, at this time, were primarily soldiers, or more properly speaking officers in the king's army, and at an earlier date they appear to have been the royal body-guard.¹ It is believed that they were recruited in early days from the younger sons of the lords, and became inmates of the king's household. Later they were rewarded for their services by grants of village lordships. We have seen that in the time of their early conquests the lordships were apparently granted to the Saxon leaders, though doubtless the king retained many in his own hands, the profits from which went to what one might term the national exchequer. In later conquests

¹ Maitland (1897), 163, 164.

it is more likely that the king's share grew larger, for kings were becoming more important, and national expenses heavier. During the repeated wars between the kings of the Heptarchy many such lordships would have come into royal possession, besides those forfeited for misdeeds or failure of heirs. In this way all the lordships would in time have become crown lands, had not the kings by charter made grants of many of these lordships to their thanes, partly to reward them for their services and partly to distribute the liability of keeping up the public services and extracting dues and services from the peasants. Thus by the tenth century most if not all the land, which was not then in the hands of the king, was held by grant or charter, either by bishops and abbeys or by thanes. Thus the term thane had come to supplant the *blaford* or lord of the earlier laws.

The thane's privilege was to extract from the peasants the payments and services due formerly to the king, to be responsible for his share in certain national works, and to keep for himself all that was over in return for his liability to military service.

The services of the geneat varied in different villages according to local custom. In some cases he had to pay *gafol* or rent, usually not in money, but in kind, and always to render such services to his lord as riding, carrying and leading loads, reaping and mowing, making new roads, going errands, and in fact any kind of work that his lord might require. Though the nature of the service was varied, and might embrace almost any type of work, the number of days on which he might be called upon to perform it was strictly limited, though the limitations varied in different villages and with different types of holdings. The cottier, for instance, was usually only compelled to work for the lord on each Monday in the year and three days a week in harvest. The gebur, on the other hand, had usually to render service two days a week, but three days a week at harvest, and also between Candlemas and Easter.

The peasants were of different types, each with his special privileges and services. The most important were the gebur, who held usually about thirty acres in the common-fields, and the cottier, whose holding was five acres, and sometimes more. There were also bee-keepers, ox-herds, cow-herds, shep-herds, goat-herds, and swine-herds, besides a number of less important people.

Cottiers, shepherds and the like appear to be new developments, resulting from the sub-division of holdings and duties; the gebur seems to be the direct representative of the original peasant, and it will be worth while to examine his status more closely. Though the amount of land held by him is not definitely stated in the document, it has been shown by Seebohm that it is assumed to have been usually thirty acres,¹ the amount known then and later as a virgate or yardland, and requiring two oxen to plough it. Besides this he had his share of meadow-land, when there was any, and the right of pasturing a cow and six sheep on the waste. Now the same writer has shown that the Saxon plough required a team of eight oxen, and the land that could be ploughed by it was in early times known as a *hwisc* or *hide*, though the latter term became used later rather as a unit of assessment than as a measure of land. The *hwisc* or *hide* seems to have meant a family, or more accurately a household, and we may infer from this that the original peasant's share was 120 acres or thereabouts in the common-fields. By the tenth century the number of peasants had increased, and the holdings had been reduced in size, so that a yardland of thirty acres was the normal holding, though some no doubt held more, and many, we know, such as the cottiers, held less. Later we shall see that while the yardland or virgate still remained the normal holding, half-virgaters, with fifteen acres, became increasingly common. The tendency throughout these centuries, and for many to come, was

¹ Seebohm (1890), 131-133, 139-148.

for the holdings to decrease in size, thus showing us that the population was increasing faster than fresh land was brought under cultivation.

The services due from the gebur were both gafol and work. Gafol was a rent or tribute paid mostly in kind, sometimes in money, though occasionally an alternative was offered. Thus the gebur paid on Martinmas day twenty-three sesters of barley and two hens, at Michaelmas Day ten gafol-pence, while at Easter he might either give a young lamb or two pence. Though the work demanded of him varied in each village, it seems in most cases to have included every type of work that the lord had need of; but it was strictly limited to a certain number of days in the week and year. If, however, he had more cattle than was usually allowed to one of his status, and he needed to pasture them on the common waste—and there was nowhere else where he could do so—he had to obtain permission from his lord, and in return plough so many acres of the lord's inland. The *Rectitudines* is explicit on this point, for it states, "If he needs more grass, then he ploughs for it as he is allowed." This custom we shall meet with again later, when it had become more common, but it is significant that it had become customary as early as the tenth century. In this we find the beginning of the practice of construing the guardianship of the waste as ownership. In the Middle Ages this was legalised by Act of Parliament, and custom and law has sanctioned its extension beyond the surface to the depths beneath. Here, in the tenth century, we see the beginning of that series of encroachments which has ended in our day in ground-rents, mining royalties, and other forms of unearned increment.

It would appear that the geneat was unable to possess any property; the land that he cultivated belonged to the community, and was rapidly becoming considered the property of the lord. The lord gave him his outfit and his cattle, even the tools for his work and the utensils for his house. "Then when he dies his lord takes back

what he leaves." Thus, not even the humble furniture of his cottage, or his wife's cooking pots, could be considered as the peasant's own. It is even a question how far he could consider his children as his own. Certainly in later days they had to obtain the lord's licence to marry, a provision made, we must suppose, to keep the population from increasing beyond the number which the village lands could conveniently support.

Services, as we have seen, consisted of rent and work. It was this work, compulsory at the will of the lord, which constituted serfdom. Though not mentioned in the *Rectitudines*, there were probably some peasants, even at this date, who paid gafol only and rendered no menial services. A century later we meet with them as free tenants, and this type occurs right through the Middle Ages. It is significant, too, that these free tenants are met with most commonly in the areas over-run by the Danes, and are conspicuously rare in regions remote from their settlements. Perhaps the presence of these free tenants, afterwards, in theory at least, an essential part of the Village Community, is the most important contribution to village life made by our Viking ancestors.

So far we have been dealing with the peasants, the greater number of whom were serfs, bound to the soil and compelled to work on stated days for their lord. They were not, however, slaves, and could not be sold or deported. It was otherwise with the *theows* or slaves, who do not appear in the *Rectitudines*, for they had no rights. As we have seen this class seems to have originated with the conquered natives, though doubtless it had been recruited later from debtors, outlaws and bastards. The theow was essentially the property of the lord, and could be bought and sold. He worked on the lord's inland or in his house, and it was his lot to perform all tasks that were not performed by the peasants.¹ We find later that they were usually possessed by the greater lords. They are common on the lands of Bishops and Abbeyes.

¹ Seebohm (1890), 164, 165.

Though their status is not described in the *Rectitudines*, Seebohm gives an extract from the bilingual dialogue of Ælfric, which is of the same date. It is not a legal document, but the picture it presents of the life of the theow is therefore more vivid.

“What sayest thou, plowman; how dost thou do thy work?”

“Oh, my lord, hard do I work. I go out at day-break driving the oxen to the field, and I yoke them to the plough. Nor is it ever so hard winter that I dare loiter at home, for fear of my lord, but the oxen yoked, and the ploughshare and coulter fastened to the plough, every day must I plough a full acre, or more.”

“Hast thou any comrade?”

“I have a boy driving the oxen with an iron goad, who also is hoarse with cold and shouting.”

“What more dost thou in the day?”

“Verily then I do more. I must fill the bin of the oxen with hay, and water them, and carry out the dung. Ha! ha! hard work it is, hard work it is! because I am not free.”¹

Another class of documents, dating from about the same time, are the numerous charters to be found in the cartularies of the Saxon Abbeys.² Most of these come down from the tenth and eleventh centuries, and though some few date from the ninth and even before, many of these earlier documents are forgeries, or at the best copies, written down from memory, of originals which had been lost or destroyed. These charters are all grants of land, or more accurately of the lordships of villages, which were at the time of the charter in the king's hands. They may be divided into three groups: (i.) grants to monasteries; (ii.) grants to thanes of lordships which they subsequently gave or bequeathed to monasteries;

¹ Seebohm (1890), 166.

² Kemble (1839-1848); Birch (1885-1893); Cartularies of Various Monasteries, published in the Rolls Series.

(iii.) grants to thanes of lordships which they did not so grant or bequeath. There is some difficulty in distinguishing between the two last types, for when a charter was found among the documents of an abbey, it was frequently assumed by the compiler of the cartulary that the lordship had subsequently been granted to the monastery. Careful investigation has shown that frequently this was not the case, and it has been thought that it was the custom for some thanes to deposit their charters with the monks for safe custody, as modern landlords deposit their title-deeds with lawyers or bankers.¹

At the close of each charter there is usually a list of boundaries of the lands in question, and these have been variously interpreted. Some writers have described them as indicating the parish boundaries at the time, others as signifying the bounds of the particular pieces of land granted. Neither of these is strictly correct. The places mentioned in these lists of boundaries have frequently been recognised in names still existing, and in many cases the areas described can be identified with accuracy. Sometimes these areas coincide with parishes, but it is not uncommonly the case that they can be shown to refer to the township, or land belonging to the village community, and inasmuch as the township frequently though not invariably became the parish, it is not uncommon to find that the bounds given in the charters are the parish boundaries.

These charters, then, show us that as early as the tenth century, and probably much earlier, each community had, besides its meadow and common-fields, its definite allotment of the waste, and that these allotments were circumscribed by certain well-recognised metes and bounds. How early the custom of so dividing the waste had arisen is uncertain; it was clearly well recognised and ancient when these charters were drawn up, and some few of them date from long before the tenth century. It is generally assumed that such division of

¹ Stenton (1913), 43.

the waste was an arrangement introduced by the Saxons on or soon after their arrival, but if we are right in concluding that, in some parts of England, the Saxons settled in villages of pre-Roman origin, it is quite possible that these bounds go back to the days when the people abandoned their primitive moorland communities to settle in the valleys.

The bounds not infrequently give corroborative evidence of the common-fields, meadows, and the like, besides showing us that mills were of frequent occurrence. Seebohm quotes the bounds of Hordwell, which he wrongly identifies with Hordwell in Hampshire, but which is Hardwell in the Vale of White Horse. He shows that among them are references to acres or strips, gores or gored-acres, to headlands, to furlongs and to linches.¹ The detailed local study of these charters and their boundaries has not yet received the attention that it deserves. In the vast majority of cases the townships so described are of the valley type, but instances occur in the uplands, away from the rivers and their alluvial meadows, and these might throw light on the form of the forest villages at this time.

We find, then, ample evidence in the tenth century of the existence of the village community as we pictured it in the first chapter. Constant reference is made to details that imply "common tillage," or the cultivation of the acre strips in common. The fact that a virgater or holder of a yardland possessed only two oxen, while a plough required eight, shows us that a large measure of co-operation was needed.

The original number of ceorls or geneats in a single village or township seems to have been ten or thereabouts, or to be more accurate this was the number of holdings, for several brothers might be sharing one holding, and, on the other hand, the lord might be holding one or more as his inland. It seems probable that with the introduction of Christianity, and the

¹ Seebohm (1890), 107, 108.

development of the system of parish priests under Archbishop Theodore, the priest was taken into the community and given an equal share with the others. This, as Seebohm has suggested,¹ seems to be the most probable origin of the custom by which a priest was considered entitled to a tenth part of the produce of the cultivated lands, a property which has survived to our own day, and is known as tithes, though for nearly a century it has been commuted into a money payment known as tithe-rent charge. By the tenth century the holdings had become smaller, and presumably more numerous, probably by the division among heirs of the original holdings. As time went on this process of division increased, though it was modified by the opposite process of amalgamation by marriage, and later by purchase. Thus the original equal shares tended to become more and more unequal, though the lord's share usually increased, as the result of forfeitures and the death of childless peasants. The share of the priest remained the same, the original tenth, for no matters are so unchanging as those which pertain to religion.

We must now turn to the two other items of community life, common law and common defence. Law in most primitive tribes is based on the maxim that "might is right," and we find in early communities the *Lex talionis*—an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth. Hence the rise of the blood-feud, best known in the Vendetta, which has existed almost to our own day in Corsica. On this principle the death of a man was avenged by his family and usually ended in the death of the murderer or one of his kin, which in its turn led to further retaliation. What was true of murder was similarly carried out in cases of injury or theft.

As people advanced in civilisation they sought a way out of this difficulty, and many attempts were made to put an end to the blood-feud. The Oresteian trilogy of Æschylus shows us how the Greeks conceived it to have

¹ Seebohm (1890), 114-117.

been ended, by absolution given first by a deity, and subsequently by a court of law. The Jews founded cities of refuge for the same purpose, while the Celtic and Teutonic peoples seem at an early date to have thrown the responsibility upon the community, and to have arranged for a definite system of compensation in money or kind. Thus we have a scale of payments called *Galanas* by the Welsh, and *Wergeld* by the Saxons as compensation for death, and similar payments for all kinds of damage to person and property.¹

Originally the responsibility was between families and tribes, each family and each tribe deciding between the members of its own body. As, however, there was usually no authority to decide between members of different tribes, tribal warfare was not uncommon. This family or tribal arrangement persisted long among the Welsh and Irish, and echoes of it survive to-day among the latter. When the Saxons arrived in this country the family system seems to have broken down, and the men were arranged for this purpose in small groups of ten or twelve; such a group was known as a *hynden* or *tithing*. In most cases, perhaps in all, the tithing was identical with the village community. If a member of a tithing was killed, his tithing recovered the *wergeld*; if he committed a murder, it was responsible for paying it. The same principle seems to have applied to minor wrongs. This system covered cases in which both lord and peasants were concerned, though a sharp distinction was drawn between the two classes. Each class had its price in every case, and the price of the lord was far in excess of that of the peasant. The theow or slave appears to have had no status, and is only dealt with as part of the property of the lord.

For common defence each village or tithing provided its *quota* for the army, or *Posse comitatus*, which, in spite of many changes in its constitution, lasted until our own time as the Militia. The *Gesith* or Thane, or by

¹ Seebohm (1904), 58, 101-107, 209; (1902), *passim*.

whatever name the lord was known, seems to have been the officer.

Villages, as we have seen, were banded together in groups of ten or twelve, those inter-commoning on one heath belonging originally to one group, though the arrangement of these groups varied somewhat from time to time. This group was called the Hundred, and was conceived of as consisting of ten or twelve tithings. A number of hundreds, possibly ten or twelve originally, formed a shire, though this arrangement was not introduced into the Midlands until the tenth century. The scheme as outlined above seems to have been evolved in its perfect form among the West Saxons, though the germ of the system probably existed elsewhere. After the Union of the country under Egbert, in 827, the Wessex model was gradually applied, as far as circumstances permitted, to the rest of the land.

Thus the functions of the Hundred Court, originally organised to settle disputes about cattle on a common heath or down, became extended to arrange differences between men of different tithings, to decide their respective contributions to the army in men and supplies, and later to apportion the taxation among the various villages. Nearly all its functions have now disappeared, though one curious liability remains: when a riot has occurred the whole hundred is responsible for making good the damage. The court was usually held at some tree or pool, or mound or stone, near the centre of the waste, common to all the townships in the hundred; before the close of the Saxon period its seat had sometimes been moved to a large village, generally on the royal domain, and one which was fast growing into a market town.

The shire court seems to have been a superior court or court of appeal, and met rarely. We have very little evidence as to its procedure or the type of business which it transacted. This court also, in early days, met in the open, in some wild spot, and we have evidence that

the Berkshire court once met at Cwickelmes Hlaw,¹ or Cuckelmesley knob, though whether this was its usual practice we are uncertain.

One practice of this time must not be passed over in silence, the practice of commendation.² We have seen that there were many free tenants, known in later times as *liberi homines*, *Sockmanni*, etc., especially in the eastern counties, where the Danes had settled most thickly. Since the reign of Ethelred it has become increasingly common for these free men to commend themselves to a lord, especially to the king, a bishop, or an abbey. If they held free land the land went with them; they performed no agricultural service, and paid no rent, but did homage for their land and performed military service. By this act of commendation the free men obtained additional security for their persons and property, for it was the duty of the lord to defend the interests of his men. They obtained also the support of the lord's oath in case they were accused of wrong-doing, and the oath of a lord, like his person and property, was more highly valued than the oath of a peasant. In return the lord obtained a capable soldier, competent to act as a non-commissioned officer, or even as an officer if need be, and those who were lords of many villages were badly in need of such men to share their responsibilities.

Maitland³ was of opinion that all the Saxon villages were once free, and that the servitude of the peasant arose from this practice of commendation. It is true that there is some evidence in support of this view in the eastern counties, and we may well believe that it accounts for the presence of lords over the free men of Danish extraction; but, unless lords had existed, as we know they had since 600, and almost certainly earlier, there would have been no one to whom it was worth while to commend oneself. (See Figure VI, page 119.)

¹ Kemble (1839-48), No. 693; (1849), ii. 49; Gomme (1880), 63-65.

² Seebohm (1890), 305; (1897), 67-75, 102, 104, 326; Vinogradoff (1908), 346, 347, 423.

³ Maitland (1897), 129, 339, 352.

As we have seen, settlements were being made at this time in the woodland areas. These sometimes resembled the valley villages in form, except that they had only one common-field, but more often the homesteads were scattered throughout the township, in open glades in the forest. The inhabitants of these forest villages seem to have depended for their sustenance more on their cattle than on their corn.

Villages in more favourably situated localities increased in size, especially those upon high-roads, which became longer as they used up more road frontage; those situated at the junctions of roads or by fords grew more rapidly, and before this century was over had often developed into towns. Towns also arose from some of the villages on the king's land, and there was a tendency for the meeting place of the Hundred Court to be moved from its original moorland site to one of these. But the majority of the villages, hemmed in between the common-fields and the alluvium, had no opportunity for enlargement.

But villages are of many types, based upon varying plans, and as yet little attempt has been made to study them. Considerable research on these lines has been made on the continent,¹ and an interesting study has recently appeared on the villages of Hertfordshire.²

There seems to have been little change in the form of a house during Saxon times; timber, wattle and daub were the only materials used, for, though building in stone had been reintroduced into the country by the foreign clergy, its use seems so far to have been confined to churches. Some of the houses seem to have grown bigger, the forks to have become longer, and to have been supported in the centre of each limb by upright poles. Where the owner possessed cattle an additional bay was added at one end, but it appears that each bay

¹ Meitzen (1879), and other works.

² Page (1920).

was invariably 16 feet or 1 rod in length, the length considered necessary for stabling a yoke of four oxen. Thus the buildings tended to become longer, larger in section, and to become divided into a central nave and two ailes, a form adopted ultimately in stone in ecclesiastical architecture.¹

¹ Addy (1898), 16-41.

CHAPTER X

THE NORMAN CONQUEST

IN the minds of many people the history of England really begins with the Norman conquest, and the preceding periods are considered as a somewhat vague introduction. It is true that documentary evidence prior to 1066 is scanty, and that the Norman Conquerors introduced into this country certain definite systems of law and administration, which have been preserved with continuity, though subject to constant changes, down to our own time. But all the essential elements which make up the English people had already arrived, for, as we shall see, the Normans were few in number and essentially of Norse origin.

Each of these varied types, arriving from diverse regions and with different past histories, had made some contribution to the general stock of ideas which can be summed up as common law and custom. It was the chief function of the Normans, not to sweep away what they found, but to preserve each element of value, and to weld together the whole into a rational and workable constitution, unwritten though it remained. We cannot, however, appreciate at its true value the really constructive work of the invaders, until we have understood the nature and the customs of the people they were called upon to govern.

We have seen that the Normans, or more properly speaking the Norman lords, had arrived in the ninth century from the Norwegian fjords, that they were for the most part men of pure Nordic type, accompanied possibly by a few of the Prospectors. Though most,

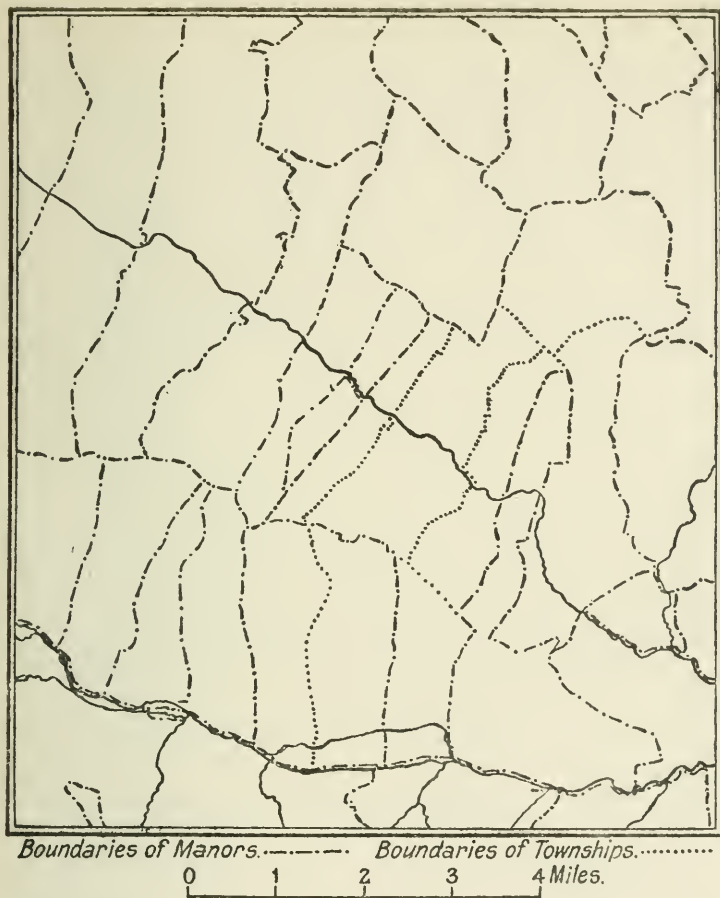


FIGURE VII
AGGREGATE MANORS AND DIVIDED TOWNSHIPS

perhaps all of them, became lords of village communities, it is at least possible that some took up independent homesteads, as their Danish fellows seem to have done in the east of England. They brought few, if any, women with them, and almost certainly took wives of the people of the land. This was true in a great measure of their dukes. It must, I think, also have been true of the rank and file. With their natural tendency to mate only with people of Nordic blood, we may imagine that they chose for preference the daughters of Frankish lords, though we may well believe that some were content to take wives from humbler homes, the more so as the descendants of the Belgæ must have been numerous, especially on the north side of the Seine.

Like the Franks who had settled there earlier, they became rapidly influenced by what was left of the Roman civilisation of Gaul. The Normans soon adopted the Frankish or French Customs, learned to speak the French language, and to some extent adopted the French law, the basis of which was Roman, though considerably influenced by Frankish customs.¹

Such were the Normans at the time of the battle of Hastings, but we must be careful not to assume that all Duke William's followers were of this type. Besides Norman lords and independent settlers it would seem that many of the men-at-arms must have been drawn from the descendants of the people they had found there on their arrival—men, in many cases, of very mixed ancestry. These would have been compelled to follow the fortunes of their lord, and were doubtless attracted to such an expedition by the hope of extensive booty. Added to this, we have evidence in the surnames of many who accompanied this expedition, that they came from beyond the limits of the Norman duchy. Ernulf de Hesdin, who received the lordship of Newbury as his share, came from Picardy, while Hascoit, who held a manor at Winterbourne, and the ancestor of the Herberts,

¹ Vinogradoff (1908), 4.

who held manors at Crookham and elsewhere, seem to have been Bretons. Adventurers came from far and near to join Duke William's expedition, and many of these foreign lords must have been accompanied by their men-at-arms. They must have been a somewhat mixed body of men, though doubtless the Norman or Nordic type predominated.¹

On their arrival in England the majority of the Saxon lords who survived were compelled to hand over their lordships to the invaders. Many had been slain at Hastings, and a number more were outlawed; most of the remainder were allowed as a rule to remain on as tenants beneath the Norman lord and in a very few cases they were permitted to retain their former position.² The Saxon writers of the time are very outspoken in recording the barbarities practised by the newcomers,³ and in some cases these statements may be no exaggeration, as, for instance, in Cheshire, where much of the land was laid waste in 1070.⁴ But throughout the greater part of the country the Normans acted with a strict sense of justice, and the peasants only exchanged one master for another. Often even that did not actually occur, and the old lord remained, but was compelled to do homage to, and to some extent to be under the control of a Norman lord.⁵

These lordships, or manors, as they now came to be called, were doubtless for the most part granted to Norman lords, but it is likely that some of the rank and file obtained them also. Some of the new lords had surnames which imply that they or their fathers had been engaged in trade or other similar occupations, while

¹ Beddoe (1885), 93-96.

² Alward the goldsmith held Shottesbrook, which had been held by his father of Queen Edith. V.C.H. Berks., i. 292, 367.

³ Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, *sub ann.*, 1066 and seqq.

⁴ Tait (1916), 7.

⁵ e.g. Alvred, who had held Hartridge in Berkshire from King Edward, continued to hold the same manor from William, son of Ansculf, the Norman lord. V.C.H. Berks., i. 350.

others again, like Humphrey Vis-de Lew of Speen and Benham, had nick-names instead of territorial surnames, though we cannot be sure in these cases that this implies that they were not of the noble caste, for such nick-names had been not uncommon among their Viking ancestors.

To a great extent the Normans respected English law and custom, especially as regards village matters and village folk. They had come here to settle and to make money, and domestic peace was a necessity if the profits from the land were to increase. Village folk are slow to change their customs and have a great respect for tradition and the opinions of the oldest inhabitant. So long, then, as these customs did not interfere with their profits, the Norman lords were willing enough to uphold them.

With regard to national law this principle held good, but to a lesser extent. Roman law, to which they had been accustomed in Normandy, was not introduced into this country, but English law was influenced in many details by French law, though this influence was not so much Roman as Frankish. This is especially noticeable in such points as the classification of persons, legal procedure, police organisation, punishments, military tenure and the ownership of land.¹

Although few changes were made, at any rate in the first instance, in the customs of the village communities, there was a radical difference between the Saxon and the Norman conception of these institutions. According to the Saxon view the peasants formed a community which held and cultivated or otherwise occupied a certain definite area known as the Township; over this community a lord, who might be a bishop or an abbot, or even the king himself, held certain jurisdiction, in return for which he held a certain share of the land, which was cultivated for him by the peasants according to certain immemorial usages, and also all such advantages as could be obtained from the waste after the customary rights

¹ Vinogradoff (1908), 1-4.

of the peasants had been satisfied. Such a township was the unit out of which other and larger areas were built up. Thus a group of townships, usually about ten or twelve, formed the hundred, while a group of hundreds, of varying number, formed the shire. Lastly a group of shires constituted the kingdom.

The Normans viewed the same system from the opposite end, and treated the kingdom as the unit, and the village as a sub-division. Thus to the Norman all the land in the kingdom belonged by right to the king, even though he might have parted with all interest and profit in certain parts of it. The shires or counties were sections of the kingdom which, in theory at least, the king had handed over to his earls, who, as it were, reigned there in his stead. Certain greater lords or Barons held from the earls groups of townships or Manors, which constituted their Baronies, while lesser lords held individual manors from them, and were the immediate lords over the peasants.

This system, of course, existed only in theory. Only comparatively few earldoms were created which included a whole county, and of these two or three only were left at the close of the century. Baronies were vague areas, of varying size, and containing usually a number of scattered manors. Manorial lords frequently held direct from the king, while barons, earls and even the king himself, might be the immediate lord of the peasants.

The king, then, was the supreme lord of the whole land, and he might also, as we have seen, hold particular manors without any under-lord. As a matter of fact he held a great many, especially in Berkshire, which, as Windsor Castle is within its bounds, is still termed the Royal County, and in which the king's position was somewhat analogous to that of an earl elsewhere.¹ The manors held by the king were of different types. The most important of these were the crown lands, or lands which were described as being Ancient Demesne of the

¹ V.C.H. Berks., i., 285, 286.

Crown. These were the manors or lordships held at his death by Edward the Confessor, or, as the lawyers put it, that were the king's "when King Edward was alive and dead." Most of these lands had probably been in royal hands since the Saxons had first conquered the country, though there were probably a few exceptions to this rule. The peasants on such lands usually possessed special privileges, which increased as time went on, and it was unusual for the king to alienate such lands from the crown, though this was done in early days. Later these lands became looked upon more and more as national property, and as inalienable.

Lands and manors forfeited for offences came into the king's hands, and were retained if especially profitable or if conveniently situated. More often they were granted to some soldier or statesman in return for services rendered, or to a religious house for the benefit of the king's soul. Thus the lands of Harold, which included the manor of Brightwalton, were granted to Battle Abbey, which the conqueror founded on the site of Senlac to commemorate his victory.¹ Lands where no ostensible lord existed—free villages, that is to say, where any such had survived—came also into the king's hands, for it was a maxim of the Normans that there could be no land without a lord, and the same principle applied to lands on which there was no village community, which resulted in great tracts of dense woodland or barren heath-land becoming royal forests.

In theory the earl held a county from the king: he was an earl palatine. This was only true for a few counties, such as Cheshire and Shropshire, and of Durham, where the Bishop held the palatinate. Even in these cases the bishops and older monasteries held direct from the king and not from the earl.² Though the palatinates were only established in their entirety in a few cases, and in still fewer outlived the eleventh century, in the

¹ Dugdale, iii., 243.

² Tait (1916), 86-101.

vast majority of counties there was a predominant lord or earl, even if he did not actually hold all the manors from the king. In Berkshire, as we have seen, the king himself was the predominant lord.¹

The greater lords or Barons held vast estates from the king or earl. Sometimes many of their manors were adjoining, forming large, continuous tracts, but as a rule by far the greater number were scattered about throughout the county, and some were to be found situated beyond its borders. The king and the earls also held baronies, and the great estates of the larger monasteries were often considered so too. These baronies had no exact official position, but were convenient names for what we now should call large estates.

But a great number of manors were held by lesser lords, sometimes Saxons, either direct from the king or earl, or sometimes from a baron or abbey. These manors were usually single townships, in fact the manor and the township were in theory coterminous. The manor was the township from the lord's point of view. Sometimes, however, a township became divided into two or more manors, that is to say two or more lords shared the lordship over it; more often a lord held two or more adjacent townships and amalgamated them into one manor. Thus a manor might in extent consist of a township, a part of one, several townships, and sometimes of more complicated fractions. (See Figure VII, page 135.)

The community of peasants under the Normans remained substantially the same as it had been in the tenth century, but the names of the different types had changed. The freemen were still there, called free tenants or sockmen. These held land free from menial service or servile tenure, and often only paid homage and were liable for military service. Sometimes we find what appear to be free tenants actually holding a township under a Norman lord, that is to say, being to all

¹ V.C.H. Berks., i. 285.

intents and purposes minor lords.¹ Among the free men we occasionally meet with some called Frenchmen, who seem to have been soldiers in the service of the Norman lords, and who were thus rewarded for their services.²

The acres were held as before by the peasants. Of these there were two main classes: the villeins and bordars, in which we may recognise the geburs and cottiers of the tenth century. The villeins were usually the holders of a virgate or yardland, though in some instances of larger amounts. In a few cases they may have been half-virgaters, but these are frequently termed oxmen, or owners of one ox—the virgater, as we have seen, normally owned two. The cottiers were now called bordars, though this term did not long survive, and among these must be included certain squatters on the waste outside the limits of the common-fields. In theory such squatters should not have existed, for no one was entitled to enclose the waste. Nevertheless, we find ample evidence of their existence later, and some indications of their presence in Saxon times. Besides these there were various other types of peasants, who held their acres for performing certain specific services, such as the radmen, whose function seems to have been to ride as messengers for their lord.³

Lastly there were the *servi* and *ancillæ*. The servi or slaves were the theows of Saxon times, bound to work all their time for their lord in return for the barest needs of existence. These were comparatively few in number twenty years after the conquest, and within a century disappear altogether. It was probably found more economical to let them have a few acres for their own support, and thus they became cottiers. The ancillæ seem to have been female domestic servants, but whether slaves or free we have no means of judging.⁴

¹ Vinogradoff (1908), 64.

² Tait (1916), 63, 64.

³ Tait (1916), 62-71; Vinogradoff (1908), 403-479.

⁴ Vinogradoff (1908), 403-7.

But, though the details of the Saxon system remained almost the same, except for some change of names, there was this radical difference in it taken as a whole. The Norman system was definitely arranged for military service at the will of the king. Each manor had to produce its quota of fighting men, drawn mainly if not exclusively from the ranks of the free tenants, and to assemble under baron or earl, or directly under the king's representative, the viscount or sheriff. This is known as the feudal system, and it survived to some extent until the reign of Charles II, when liability for military service was commuted into the land tax. The germs of this system were, however, present in Saxon days, for the grants of lordships to the thanes were in consideration of military services rendered, and carried with them liability to serve again at the king's command.

The liability of the peasant to serve in the *posse comitatus* seems to have diminished, though it did not wholly disappear, but for a time this force seems to have been used rather for police than for strict military duties. When foreign wars were undertaken the army consisted largely of lords of varying degrees and of free men, though in later days their numbers were swelled by impressing outlaws and felons into the service, and remitting terms of imprisonment to those willing to serve abroad.¹

The duties of the peasant still consisted in growing corn on his own acres and his lord's demesne, and thereby, if need be, supplying the needs of the army in the field. Thus the liabilities of the peasants outside the township were mainly confined to acting as a police force and as an army service corps.

The great bulk of the evidence as to the condition of the English village immediately after the Norman conquest is derived from the Domesday Book. This great survey was compiled in 1086 as the result of inquiries made throughout the country by travelling

¹ Cal. Pat. Rolls, Edw. iii. (1354-1358), State Papers, London, *passim*.

commissioners. Its object was to gain accurate statistical information as to the land and its inhabitants for the purpose of taxation, but incidentally it throws much light on other social and economic questions.

Every manor is dealt with under a separate heading, and we learn the name of the lord, and any under lords, as well as that of the Saxon lord in the time of Edward the Confessor. It tells us of the number of peasants of different categories, the amount of meadow and land suitable for ploughing, besides some indications of the quantity of woodland, and it gives us information about mills, fisheries and similar sources of profit. It likewise informs us how many plough teams were then in use, and the value of the manor at that time, in the time of King Edward, and sometimes at an intermediate date.

From this document we get one of the most complete pictures that we possess of the social and economic condition of the country, though it is silent on many points that would be of great interest to us. Much study has been expended and many volumes written upon this survey, and our knowledge of the conditions obtaining at this time has thereby been increased to no little extent. Much more remains to be done, especially in the study of the record in the light of intimate knowledge of the locality.

The improved economic condition due to the Norman Conquest caused the small towns to increase in size and importance, though it frequently happened, that, owing to changes in the course of the lines of trade, new towns sprang up at fords or bridges, which detracted from the importance of the rising towns of Saxon date. Thus in Berkshire Newbury had already ousted Thatcham at the time of the Domesday Survey, while a few years later Hungerford eclipsed the Saxon Kintbury.

While the houses of the peasants remained substantially the same, the Norman lords erected more sumptuous halls or manor houses. In a few cases these were castles of stone, but as masons were scarce and had to be

imported from abroad, the greater number of the lords had to content themselves with wooden buildings, not unlike those of the Saxons, but placed within a wooden palisade and surrounded by a ditch.

These buildings had perpendicular walls for about six feet from the ground, but were otherwise constructed very like those of the Saxons. The forks were set up as before, as many as were required, and across them, about six feet from the ground, was placed a collar-beam, which was continued outwards on both sides until it overhung the feet of the forks. A vertical framework was then erected between the base of the forks, and the ends of the collar-beam, and light rafters, carrying a thatched roof, ran from the top of this framework to the ridge. The building was divided into two halves, a hall for the men and a bower for the women, and sometimes a buttery was added.¹

¹ Addy (1898).

CHAPTER XI

THE MEDIÆVAL MANOR

DURING the centuries that immediately succeeded the Norman conquest, considerable progress was made towards harmonising the Saxon and Norman systems. This was particularly so during the reign of Henry I, who had married the heiress of the Saxon monarchy, and was anxious that Norman and Saxon should live together in peace. In spite of this the two systems never completely coalesced, although they soon arrived at a working compromise. The manor and the township, though intimately related and usually coterminous, remained to some extent distinct, each going its own way, though generally without conspicuous friction.

The Norman lord was more energetic than his Saxon predecessor, and desired above all things efficiency; This to a great extent he achieved, and the land became more productive. The peasants were expected to work harder than heretofore, which as a rule they disliked intensely, but speaking generally they received fair and not unkindly treatment from their lord, who, though he despised them, yet realised that they were a necessary part of the system which provided him with an income. On one point alone was his severity extreme. As a true Nordic, whose ancestors had roamed the wide steppes, or hunted in the northern forests, his love of sport was his ruling passion. Sport was, in his eyes, the privilege of the noble, and was not to be shared with the peasant, and woe betide the villein who so far forgot his position as to lay snares for conies, or otherwise interfere with

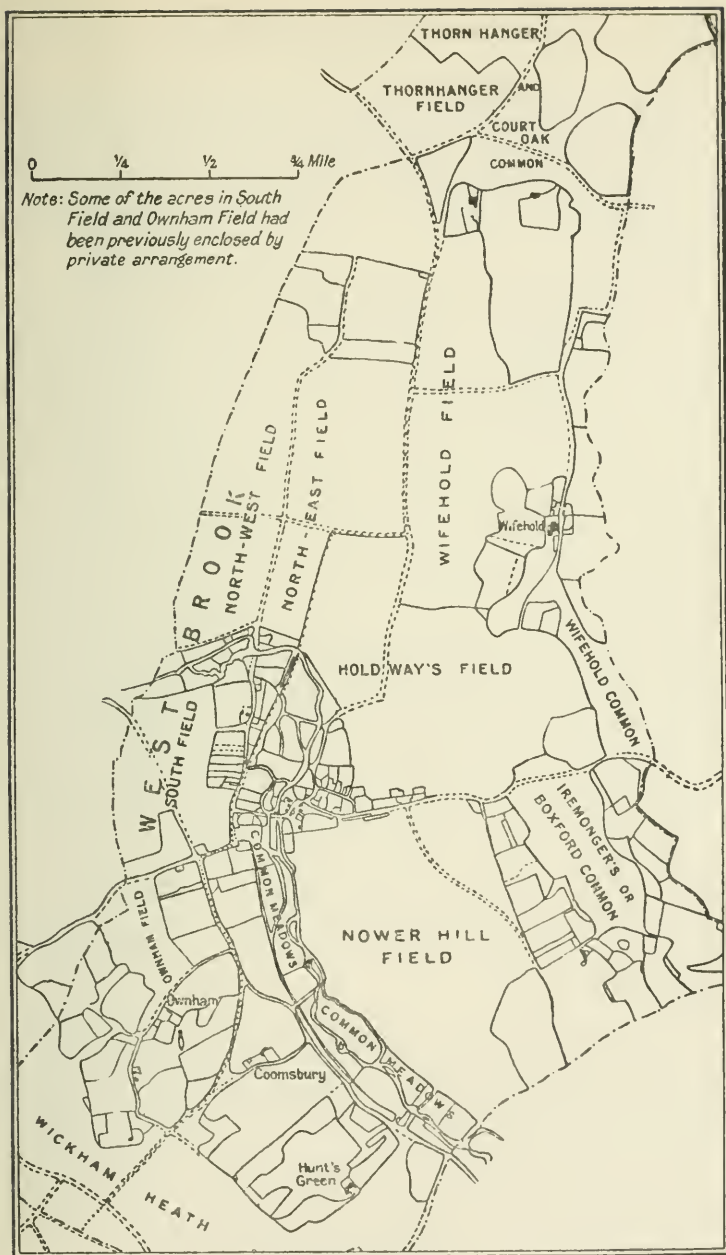


FIGURE VIII
COMMON FIELDS OF BOXFORD AND WESTBROOK BEFORE 1820 ENCLOSURE

the lord's prerogatives.¹ The lord thus took an increasing interest in the waste, where game abounded, and by degrees came to look upon it as his own, considering the peasant's right of pasturage there to be in the nature of a concession—a necessary but unfortunate obligation.

During the first two centuries after the conquest the sporting rights over the more extensive areas of waste land were normally claimed by the king, and occasionally by him granted to some of his greater lords. Thus, at the time of the coronation of Henry II, 1154, large tracts were reserved as royal sporting grounds and were termed forests, while other equally extensive areas had been granted to great nobles for a like purpose and were called chaces. During the next 150 years there was a tendency for these forests and chaces to be extended so as to include the waste lands of all the adjoining villages, until vast areas were becoming reserved for the pleasure of a very few of the greatest men in the realm. These extensions continued until the beginning of the fourteenth century, when Edward III reduced them to the dimensions that had existed at the coronation of Henry II, and the sporting rights over the village waste were granted, or more correctly speaking restored, to the manorial lords. The peasants, however, had no rights to the wild animals or birds that lived on the village waste, or damaged their crops, and have only acquired very limited powers for their destruction in quite recent years.

¹ These sporting proclivities were shared by the Norman ecclesiastics, for in 1380, Ralph Erghum, Bishop of Salisbury, addressed a letter "to his beloved sons, the Rector of the Parish Church of Ashbury, and the perpetual Vicar of the Parish Church of Lambourne," stating that "certain sons of iniquity" had "illegally, violently, and without authority entered upon our manor of Thrussheley, Beydon, Byley and Bisshopston," and had "captured rabbits and other game . . . to the manifest prejudice of our Cathedral Church of Sarum, . . . and to the danger of their own souls." He, therefore, charged these clergy that "during the celebration of the Mass . . . with ringing of bells, lighted candles, and the cross extended in your hands, with all accustomed solemnity, you pronounce the Sentence of the Greater Excommunication against these violent evil-doers." Sarum MSS. Erghum Register, fol. 53, Bishop's Manors. This document is quoted in full in Footman (1894), 53, 54.

Under the more settled conditions which prevailed under Norman rule, and with the absence of the Viking menace, the population increased considerably, and fresh houses and lands were needed for the peasants. At first it was possible to erect more houses in the tun or village, and to add more acres to the common-fields, but soon the tun was filled and it became necessary to go beyond the fields and build fresh houses on the edge of the waste. This in turn limited the extension of the common-fields. We have seen that this sometimes occurred in Saxon days, but in the century immediately following the conquest it became more common. These new houses required land for cultivation and closes for their oxen, and it was consequently necessary to enclose still more of the waste. Where the lord had unrestricted sporting rights the matter was simple, but doubtless he expected compensation in the form of services from the enclosers, just as we have seen that he expected extra ploughing to be done when additional cattle were put out to pasture. When, however, the king or some great lord claimed rights of forest or chace over the village waste, a further licence had to be obtained for this enclosure, or *assart* as it was called, and frequent licences of this nature were granted by Henry I and subsequent monarchs. Thus in the Abingdon Chronicle we find licences granted to the abbey by Henry I in respect of their manors of Chieveley and Welford.¹ Though records of these licences are not common, they must frequently have been granted, for it is no uncommon thing to find hamlets, farms or cottages, with their enclosures, lying between the common-fields and the waste. Thus at Boxford we have evidence of the existence of Coombesbury Farm in 1180,² and of Ownham about 1240.³ (See Figure VIII, page 147.)

¹ Chron. Monast. Abingd. (1858), ii. 82, 83.

² *Ibid.* ii., 303.

³ Testa de Neville (Rec. Com.), p. 125.

Often, no doubt, such assarts were made without licence, but in these cases they were of doubtful validity ; but manorial supervision was sometimes lax, and we find whole villages growing up on the edge of the waste, and little freeholds arising by prescription. Many such heath villages occur throughout the country,—a good example is Cold Ash, which arose on the waste of Thatcham,—and such villages are to this day noted for the sturdy independence of their inhabitants, who frequently gain their living largely by such trades as draining, thatching, and well-sinking.

But it was not only the peasants who thus encroached upon the waste. The lords, especially if resident, did so not infrequently and for their own ends. Such encroachments probably began soon after the conquest, and these actions were legalised in 1235 by the Statute of Merton, which enabled the lords, provided they left sufficient pasture for their tenants, to enclose the residue.

The Statute of Merton is in some sense a turning point in the history of the village community. We have seen that the position of the lord in early days might be considered as the guardian of the waste, and that by the tenth century this was beginning to be understood as ownership rather than trusteeship. By the Statute of Merton his claim to ownership became legalised, and a great step was taken in that gradual evolution which has been proceeding from the position of a governor to that of an actual owner of the soil. An immediate result was the enclosing of large areas as parks, and the erection of mansions far from the village ; this isolated the lords still further from the life of the village, and increased the gulf, already wide enough, between him and the peasants.

At this stage it may be well to redraw the picture of the village and its lands as it was in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. During this period our material is much richer, for we have many custumals and rentals, and not a few court rolls, or minutes of the manorial courts. It

is true that most of these belong to monastic manors, but in such matters there was probably little difference between estates of ecclesiastical and lay lords. Added to this we have treatises written by lawyers, and reports of cases heard at the high courts, so that our picture can be filled in more fully than in earlier times.

We find the Township, or Vill, as it is now frequently called, existing much as it had done from the earliest days of the Saxon settlement. Changes have sometimes been made; occasionally two or three townships have been combined into one, more often a township has been divided into several, but it is rare that the bounds of the original township have been altered, or at any rate entirely obliterated.

We find the village or tun as before, situated near its water-meadow, though in the case of the forest villages the meadow may be scanty or non-existent and the village may be replaced by a few scattered hamlets. Then there are the three fields in the valley villages, grown sometimes now to four or even more, and the single field of the forest villages, changed into two, an infield and an outfield. These fields are divided by balks of green turf into rectangular strips, an acre in extent, measuring usually one furlong by four poles, though sometimes of less regular form; near the outskirts of the field, among the later additions, may be found half-acre patches, gored acres or triangular patches, and irregular scraps known as no-man's-land. Beyond this again were the assarts, sometimes hamlets with a group of small enclosed fields, sometimes isolated farms, often small squatter's cottages, lying either singly or in groups. Perhaps there may be the mansion of the lord, lying surrounded by a large and well-wooded park, though this is a feature that is met with more frequently in later centuries, and beyond all these the waste—rough pasture, woodland, heath or down, extending until it reached the well-known bounds, which separated it from the waste of the adjoining villis.

With rare exceptions the lord held certain lands in demesne, just as the Saxon thane had held his inland. Sometimes this may have been a solid block of acres; more often it consisted of strips scattered among those of the peasants. These acres were cultivated for the most part by the peasants, who, as we have seen, were compelled to give so many day's service during the year; part of the work was done by slaves, but these disappeared soon after the conquest, when their work seems to have been performed by cottagers, who were paid for so doing. The lord also had the mill—sometimes several. To these the peasants brought their grist, casting a certain proportion into the lord's coffer or bin as payment for grinding; the miller was a villein or cottier, who attended to the mill as his service to the lord. Subject to the grazing rights of the tenant, and certain variable privileges, such as poles for fencing, and brushwood, gorse or peat for fuel, the lord had assumed complete ownership of the waste, and all timber as well as game was his by right.

In the eastern counties many free tenants were existing at the time of the conquest, descendants it would seem of Danish settlers. In the twelfth and thirteenth centuries it had become customary for every manor to have at least one free man, in fact it was a legal maxim that no manor was complete without one; this law was not, however, invariably obeyed. The free tenant did no menial service, and merely paid rent and rendered homage besides doing military service. As time went on this became more and more commuted to a rent in money, and later, as the manorial system decayed, this money payment was frequently capitalised, and the free tenant became what we now know as a freeholder.

The typical peasant was the villein or man of the vill, who held his share of meadow and arable strips, as the gebur had done before. Though the amount varied, there were certain normal quantities which were the standard. Thus a hide was usually 120 acres, and its

holder had eight oxen, while a virgate, the Saxon yard-land, was thirty acres and went with two oxen. Similarly there were half-hides with four oxen, and half-virgates, or bovates, with one ox. Though these were the normal holdings, all kinds of intermediate sizes existed, and as time went on this variation tended to increase. Each villein had a proportionate share of meadow-land, and certain definite rights of pasturage on the waste; he also had rights of turbary or turf-cutting, and of pannage or of feeding his swine on acorns or beech-mast. These rights of pasturage and pannage, which seem in early days to have been unlimited, had long been strictly regulated, and any extension of them had to be paid for by extra service.

This limiting of the rights of pasturage, which, as we have seen, had arisen in the tenth century, was known as the custom of *Stint*. It had become necessary because the peasants and their herds had been increasing, while the waste had been diminishing in extent as the common fields grew larger. Stint was therefore a measure designed by the community for its own protection. The lord, as protector of the waste, administered the law of stint, and only issued licences for further cattle in return for services, the ploughing of certain acres, known at the time as *aver-earth* or *grass-earth*.¹

Holders of less than fifteen acres were called cottiers,—the bordars of Domesday,—and usually held about five acres, though not infrequently a smaller amount. They seem to have had no oxen, and presumably depended on the villeins to plough their acres; payment for this was apparently made in service. They had to perform many services of a varied nature for their lord, besides paying a rent in money, which was often nearly as high as that paid by some of the villeins. It is clear from this that they must have received wages of some sort, usually from the villeins, sometimes perhaps for extra services performed for the lord. The cottiers appear to have had

¹ Vinogradoff (1905), 168, 234, 287, f-n. 65; (1892), 259, 281.

no share in the meadow, and seldom any rights of pasturage; but they had strictly limited rights of pannage and turbary where such existed.

The services of the villeins and cottiers were of various kinds and differed to some extent from manor to manor. The most usual were *week-work* or work on the lord's demesne for a certain number, usually three, days a week, and *boon-work* or special work at the "request," which we may interpret as the command, of the lord. There were also many payments due in money or in kind, which were known as *gafol*, and included such items as *church-shot*, apparently for the upkeep of the church, *hearth-penny*, which went towards the repair of the houses on the manor, and *easter-dues*, which seem to have consisted of a lamb, presumably for the lord's table, or a payment in lieu of this.¹

But besides these payments and services the peasant was subjected to restraints which were felt more acutely; these were of many kinds, and varied in detail in different manors. The most important were the necessity of obtaining the lord's licence, frequently in consideration of a fine, for the marriage of his daughter, and for the sale of his oxen. A further obligation was to do suit at the lord's court, that is to attend the meetings of the court and if required act upon the jury, and suit at his mill, which meant all his grain must be taken there to be ground. Lastly he might not leave the land without the lord's licence, which at this time seems seldom if ever to have been granted. This meant that he was bound to the soil *adscriptus glebæ*, though the hardship could not have been so great at this time as it became later, for had he left the manor there would have been no opening for him elsewhere, and no alternative for him but to become an outlaw.²

Such were the principal services and obligations, but they were all strictly limited and defined by the custom

¹ Seebohm (1890), 76-81.

² Vinogradoff (1892), 59-88.

of the manor, and these customs varied considerably. Generally speaking, wherever it has been possible to make a comparison, the services expected in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries were more onerous than those of the tenth, and we may expect that the obligations were proportionately stricter.

The affairs of the manor were managed at periodic meetings called courts, which were presided over in theory by the lord, but in practice by his seneschal or land-agent. These courts were of three kinds. The View of frankpledge or court leet was the king's court; its main purpose was to register the male population over twelve years of age, and to try and pass judgment on certain offenders. The court baron was a court of the lord, and seems to have been concerned solely with the free tenants; it was to all intents and purposes a rent audit. The customary court dealt with the customary or servile tenants; it was concerned with the services due to the lord and took notice of omissions of agricultural duties. It was for making all arrangements necessary for common tillage or other works on the land, to decide disputes which had arisen among the peasants, and to try offences either against the lord or the community. The last two courts were in reality two divisions of the halimote or the court of the lord. The court leet was the court of the lord as representing the king's jurisdiction within the manor, the two parts of the halimote were his court for deciding his relations respectively with his free and servile tenants. The customary court retained also certain elements of the old tun-moot, or meeting of the community to decide matters of common interest.¹

Through these three centuries the work and services of the peasants continued to increase steadily. The population was increasing, more food was needed, yet from lack of proper manuring the old plough lands were deteriorating in value. The lord on the other hand was determined upon efficiency, and as his standard of life

¹ Vinogradoff (1892), 354-396.

improved he required larger profits with which to supply his ever-increasing needs.

Meanwhile, though the peasant's lot was hard, and the work expected of him interminable, he had his compensations. He was sure of a roof over his head, for although his cottage was a poor hovel the lord was bound to find him one and to keep it in a reasonable state of repair. He had also no fear of starvation, for his food and drink were assured, and, though doubtless the quality was poor, and the quantity only barely sufficient for his needs, it was not in the lord's interest that he should be too poorly fed to be able to contribute his expected share of the work. Thus though he had to work hard for his living and could put nothing by or call anything his own, his food, the materials for his clothing and his humble cottage were assured to him till death made them no longer necessary, and he had no fear of becoming starved or homeless. Besides this the lord kept peace within the manor and defended its members from outside aggression and it was only in unsettled times that he had any need to fear violence to his person ; injury to property mattered not to him, for he had none.

Thus each manor was a self-contained unit, growing sufficient food for itself and sometimes some to spare, and at the same time providing an adequate supply of flax and wool to clothe its inhabitants, and where there was much down land having wool to spare for the outside world. The manor found itself in everything but salt and iron, and these commodities it acquired by barter with some of its surplus corn or wool ; the remainder of that surplus, or what it brought in, went in to the lord's pocket, and enabled him to buy foreign luxuries and gradually to raise his standard of living. The free tenants were also enabled sometimes to save a little, and though in theory the customary tenants were debarred from doing so, it seems probable that towards the close of the thirteenth century they were occasionally able to accumulate some savings.

There was little or no change in the village plan during these centuries, in fact it is doubtful whether any important modifications had taken place since the arrival of the Normans. We have seen that at an early date the alluvium and the common fields prevented expansion, and so it comes about that at the time of the enclosure of their common-fields most villages retained the same general plan which they had taken in Saxon times, while in some cases this in turn may have been taken over from earlier periods. In early mediæval times additional members of the population had to find accommodation on the waste, but in towns, and in some of the larger high-road villages with urban propensities, fresh homes were erected in the tofts or closes, giving rise to courts and alleys, or else were built along the way-side waste, thus narrowing the high-ways.

During the period under review the peasants' houses more and more copied the style of the manor houses, and vertical walls came into fashion, though the materials used were still timber, wattle and daub. But as the lords grew richer their timber dwellings often gave way to more pretentious forms built of stone, such as the manor-house of Kensworth in Hertfordshire, which had a *Halla* or *Hall* for the men, a *Thalamus* or *Bower* for the women, and between them a *Domus* or entrance hall, from which the two other rooms opened, and which alone had accession to the outside.¹ Where stone was used it was possible to build an upper storey, such as we find in the manor-house at Appleton in Berkshire, which dates from the reign of Henry II,² and again in the manor-house at Charney-Basset in the same county, which has a hall and buttery on the ground floor, with a chamber and chapel on the floor above them."³

¹ Addy (1898), 129-131.

² Lysons (1806), i. 212, 234, and 2 plates.

³ Addy (1898), 146.

CHAPTER XII

THE DECAY OF THE MANOR

It is generally agreed that one of the results of the Norman Conquest was that the population began to increase in a degree not met with in Saxon times. The Viking raids had ceased, or rather these Nordic pirates were directing their energies towards the east rather than to the south-west, and the population of this country had an opportunity to recover from the effects of their ravages. The new Norman lords had learned much from their Frankish neighbours and from the Roman civilisation which had not been obliterated in Gaul; they were determined, therefore, to obtain wealth as well as power from their new lands, and saw to it that these were cultivated to the best advantage. This improvement in agriculture was fostered also by the monks, who were introduced by them from the continent, more particularly by the Cistercians, who were above all things an agricultural order.

It is not strange, therefore, that a considerable increase in the population took place, and it has been calculated that between 1086 and 1340 the numbers in England alone arose from 1,500,000 to 4,000,000.¹ This factor alone caused considerable change in village life, for though the towns, which were increasing rapidly in size owing to the growth of trade with the continent, absorbed a large part of this surplus population, the villages grew as well and it became necessary not only to increase the common fields, in size and sometimes in number, but to enclose for cultivation some part of the waste.

¹ For the Domesday figures see Ashley, 68, 69; for that of 1340 see Meredith, p. 42.

These enclosures of the waste, or "assarts" as they are termed, consisted at first only of buildings, yards and small closes for the plough oxen, but it became increasingly common for them to include small arable fields, which were held, not in common as was the other arable land, but by the occupier of the assart alone; in technical legal phraseology they were held not in commonalty but in severalty. This was the beginning of the decay of the community.

The existence of arable land thus held in severalty enabled the occupier, if he were a progressive man and devoted to high farming, to improve his holding in ways impossible to the holder of acres in the common fields. Under Norman lords and Monastic orders such progressive farming was encouraged, and the lands held in severalty began to improve more rapidly than the acres in the common fields, which, owing to the lack of adequate manuring, were becoming exhausted. These, in turn, tended to demonstrate the economic advantages of holding in severalty, and in some measure to discredit the common field system, though for a time this change of view was not sufficiently strong to break down the custom of common tillage. After the passing of the Statute of Merton in 1235, the lord sometimes created a demesne out of the waste, cultivating his new lands in severalty, thereby still further encouraging the idea that the village community was becoming obsolete.

A further change consequent on the Norman Conquest was the great increase that occurred in the flocks of sheep; this was specially the case on manors held by the monastic orders, notably the Cistercians. The example of the monks was soon followed by the Norman lords, who had now come to look upon the waste as their own perquisite, for they were not slow in realising that considerable profits were to be made thereby.

Whether wool was exported to the continent in Saxon days seems uncertain; such a trade, if it existed, must have been small, and very precarious with the seas

infested with Norse pirates. That this export trade increased rapidly after the Norman Conquest seems certain, and it is thought that it was because Matilda, the wife of the Conqueror, was a daughter of the Count of Flanders, that the trade arose with the Low Countries,¹ which had for some time been an important centre of the textile industry.

During the thirteenth century the English flocks had multiplied, and the wool exported to Flanders had increased considerably. The waste lands, especially those which were free from woodland, such as the chalk downlands, became more valuable, and the export of wool had become the leading industry in the country. Following on the export trade there came, as a natural consequence, the importing of foreign manufactured goods, especially woollen and linen fabrics, and the standard of living improved, especially among the manorial lords and to some extent among the inhabitants of the towns.

Thus an active trade arose with the continent, and especially with Flanders; this had a considerable effect upon the economic life of the English people, who were no longer compelled to depend solely upon their own products, as had been the case during Saxon times. This foreign trade reacted upon the home trade, and English towns began more and more to exchange commodities and, what is far more important to us, the towns began exchanging their manufactured goods, often of foreign make, with the inhabitants of the English villages, especially with those who had wool to sell. These, it is true, were more often the manorial lords, whether lay or ecclesiastical, but as time went on the richer peasants shared more and more in this trade, their standard of living improved and they thus became more independent.

Before this time each village had been to all intents and purposes self-supporting, purchasing little except

¹ Meredith, 27.

salt and iron, and paying for these with its surplus products. Such exchanges had usually been carried out by barter, and little if any money had appeared in the transactions. But as trade increased this system of barter was inadequate to meet the case, for itinerant merchants of manufactured goods were not content to take in exchange for them sacks of corn or bales of wool, and money came to be used more freely in this traffic. Thus during the early half of the Middle Ages we find barter giving way to cash transactions, and the self-contained condition of village life tending to disappear.

The use of coinage for commercial purposes is believed to have been instituted by the Lydians during the sixth or seventh century B.C., but the precious metals had been utilised for this purpose since the beginning of the bronze age. Following the Lydian example the Greeks spread the coinage system throughout the Mediterranean world, while Alexander carried it to the east, and from the merchants of Massilia the custom spread into Gaul, and reached this country a century or more before the arrival of the Romans.

With the conquest of Greece the Roman commercial world fell heir to the cash system, and inherited a vast treasure in gold, silver and bronze coins. As Roman wealth increased tropical and other exotic products were imported from India and perhaps from China, and as the Empire produced little that it thought worth while to export beyond its bounds, these imports were paid for in gold, which was eagerly sought for by Indian princes intent on the formation of war chests. The admirable banking system of the Roman Empire caused the loss of specie to be little felt, for credit was more and more taking the place of cash transactions; but when times became less settled, and the Nordic barbarians from the German plain were threatening the existence of the empire, this loss of specie became a serious source of danger, and one emperor after another was at a loss for

gold to pay his legions. With the downfall of the empire the banking system fell with a crash, gold and silver coins were relatively scarce, the more so as much had been buried for safety when barbarian attacks were imminent, while much more had been looted by the invaders, who, having no use for it as a medium of exchange, converted it into ornaments for their persons.

The Nordic invaders had lived by barter when not by plunder, and barter became again the established usage throughout most of Europe, excepting in those parts overrun by the Saracens, who with their Jewish allies were more accustomed to the use of coins. As the self-contained village was a feature of the new Europe, this lack of a coinage was but a slight inconvenience, but as trade began to increase in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries the need of it was felt more acutely, and every effort was made to increase the supply of gold and silver ; in this the Italian states, especially Florence and Venice, were the most successful.

Now that foreign commodities, calculated to improve the standard of living, were to be purchased at a price, but usually for cash, the lords were anxious for a ready supply of this medium, and throughout the centuries under review we notice a steady increase in the tendency to value services in terms of money, and to substitute cash payments for payments in produce or service. The lighter services expected from him as this system developed enabled the peasant to devote more time and energy to the cultivation of his own acres, with the result that his land produced more, and that he had a larger surplus to dispose of in the neighbouring town in return for cash, part of which he remitted to his lord as rent. Thus there was a tendency for service to be converted into cash payments, and for servile tenure to grow into renting tenure ; the constant foreign wars in the times of the Edwards hastened on this change, as the lords needed additional cash to enable them to equip the troops of men at arms, which they had to furnish

to the king's armies in return for their lands held by feudal tenure.

Thus the lord obtained the cash that he required for his increased expenditure by disposing of the surplus products of his demesne lands; sometimes the tenant did likewise, and offered to his lord a cash payment in lieu of the services formerly rendered. We have no means of judging which of these two methods was most commonly pursued, but it seems probable that both policies to some extent prevailed, though the latter became increasingly common as time went on. Thus the lord acquired wealth, the peasant by degrees his freedom.

But many lords were by no means willing to release their tenants from their services, especially in the case of the villeins, who carried out the more important agricultural operations on the demesne. They more readily permitted the cottiers to commute their services into cash, for these services were usually of a minor nature and at uncertain times, while the cottiers still remained willing to perform them for a small money wage.¹

In spite of these drawbacks commuting of all kinds went on during the twelfth and subsequent centuries, though not so rapidly in Berkshire as in East Anglia or the Midlands. Still we find instances of early commutation even here, especially among the smaller tenants. It seems probable that the lay lords were more prone to make these changes than were the monastic bodies, for the monks required little cash for luxuries and none at all for warlike equipment. It so happens that most of the records which have come down to us and which give us the status of the tenants are custumals and manorial rolls of monastic properties, on which the change was taking place very slowly; if we had similar records of the lay manors, we should probably find that on them progress had been more rapid.

¹ As early as 1180 fifty out of sixty-five cottiers at Boxford paid rent only to the Abbey of Abingdon, while the remaining fifteen rendered service and paid a smaller rent; all the villeins performed services, though they paid a small rent in addition. Chron. Monast. Abingd. ii. 302, 303.

The prospect of commuting service for a money payment was slow and unequal, and had not proceeded far on some manors by the middle of the fourteenth century. Then came a great crisis which gave an immense impetus to the movement, so great as to have been considered by some as the cause of the change. In 1349 the Black Death spread with singular rapidity throughout the land, destroying the people in thousands till not a village escaped its ravages. How terrible were the results of its devastation may be gathered from the calculation that has been made that it reduced the population of England from 4,000,000 to 2,500,000.¹

As an instance of its severity in Berkshire one may quote from the *Inquisitio post mortem*, taken on the death in 1349 of William de Hastings, lord of the manor of Benham Valence. "Westbrook is a parcel of the manor, a park with game; there were six customary tenants, all dead now and their lands uncultivated."² In a part of the same document relating to the Town of Newbury we read; "a sixth part of the pleas and perquisites of the Court of Newbury, a twelfth part of the market-toll, and a sixth part of the tan-mill, which used before the pestilence to be worth yearly 26s. 8d., but now yields nothing on account of the deadly pestilence."

Such extracts might easily be multiplied, for the plague fell heavily in all counties and in all townships; but the hand of death fell unequally, and some villages suffered more severely than others. Throughout the country there was a serious shortage of labour, but in some manors this was more acute than in others. This led some lords to tempt peasants to come from one manor to another, although the law did not allow of this, for the tenant was attached to the soil, *adscriptus glebæ*.

The natural result was higher wages and worse farming: larger expenditure and less receipts. Conservative

¹ This figure has been calculated from the results of the poll-tax in 1377. cf. McCulloch (1839), i. 398, quoting Chalmers (ed. 1802), p. 13.

² Chanc. Inq. p.m. 23 Edw. III (2nd pt. 1st Nos.), 37.

landlords were compelled to adopt the more modern practices which had long been in vogue among the more far-seeing, and before long it became the usual practice to let out the demesne land to a tenant upon a lease. At first it was customary for the tenant to pay rent both for the land and for the stock upon it, then the tenant, as he grew richer, purchased the live-stock and paid rent only for the land, lastly in many cases he purchased a lease for three lives, paying only a small money rent as a form of acknowledgement.¹

Thus we see, as the result of economic causes, acting slowly in the first instance but precipitated by the crisis of the Black Death and the consequent shortage of labour, the servile tenure, which had obtained for so long, became by degrees converted into a renting tenure, often into a leasehold or copyhold tenure, which, in its turn, in later days, frequently became by redemption a freehold tenure.

While this change of position was rapidly taking place among the larger tenants, the free men and the more prosperous villeins, other changes of no less moment were occurring in the status of the lesser peasants. Labour, as we have seen, was scarce, and the cultivation of the demesne lands by the lord through his bailiff was giving place to leases for three lives or for a term of years. Both of these changes tended to encourage the commutation of services into a money payment, for the lord no longer required the services as he no longer cultivated his own demesne, while he was glad of the cash as the standard of living was rising more rapidly, and the price of commodities was rising accordingly.

For these reasons the servile tenure of the peasants as an economic factor came gradually to an end. Social customs, however, move more slowly, and are less directly affected by economic changes, and for some years to come the social status of the villeins and cottiers remained unchanged. They paid rent for their holdings and received wages for their work, but in social matters

¹ V. C. H. Berks II., 193.

they were still deemed serfs, bound to the land, and requiring the lord's licence even to allow their children to marry.

Obviously this paradoxical condition could not last; it was impossible that customary tenants, who had now become independent lease-holders paying a money-rent, and who had, from the economic standpoint, exchanged the servile for the cash nexus, should be content in social matters to remain in a servile state. An unstable equilibrium had been set up. The peasants soon grew more prosperous, and with prosperity came independence of thought. The early Renaissance, already in full vigour on the continent, was making its effect felt in this country, while Wycliffe and his Lollards were preaching their new doctrines throughout the land, and John Ball was announcing the equality of mankind. Little wonder is it that their servile social status became more galling the more clearly it was recognised. Their position was illogical, and could not be permanent. They demanded their freedom and this was denied them.

These were the causes underlying the peasants' revolt which broke out in 1381. Led by Wat Tyler, a peasant in whom, it is believed, there ran noble blood, and who, in consequence, felt his position more acutely, and who was, moreover, a born leader of men, the peasants marched upon London and by means of threats extracted from the king, Richard II, a promise of emancipation. Soon after this had been effected a tumult arose, and Wat Tyler fell stabbed by the dagger of London's mayor. The loss of their leader caused dismay among the peasants the revolt was quickly quelled, and the promise extracted by violence from the monarch was revoked. Thus ended the peasants' revolt, apparently without effect.

Not so, however, in reality. Though the charter of freedom, so dearly won, was revoked by parliament, the economic causes that we have been tracing, led to the rapid abandonment of serfdom, though in practice, and in a very modified form, it continued for more than two centuries in certain very backward areas. It is found

persisting in Berkshire as late as 1463,¹ perhaps because so few of the Berkshire peasants joined in the peasants' revolt.

Still such vestiges as remained became more and more a form, a shadow of what once had been a substance, but the system, which had outlived its usefulness, was doomed to decay, and so it came about that without any enactment of parliament, the serfs, who during the previous three thousand years, had become more and more enslaved, eventually acquired their freedom during the course of these few centuries, by means of economic causes only.

As the status of the peasant improved, so did his dwelling. An upper floor above the collar-beam, first used for the storage of fodder, began to be used as an attic in which to sleep. Dormer windows were inserted, often on the floor level, though access was obtained by a ladder, as stairs were as yet unknown. The manor houses, now often built on the waste and surrounded by a spacious park, were becoming commodious mansions, often built of stone where that material was available, while in well-wooded regions they were built of timber frames, the panels of which were no longer filled in with wattle and daub, but with thin bricks set in herring-bone fashion. The first brick building known is said to be Little Wenham Hall in Suffolk, which dates from the end of the thirteenth century,² but it is probable that bricks had occasionally been used for filling in timber houses, and for building hearths before that date. In the fourteenth century the custom became more common, and was even used by the more prosperous peasants, while in the following century we find extensive buildings and castellated mansions built in excellent brickwork without the intervention of timber.

¹ Berks. Deeds, Madg. Coll., Oxon. (Tubney 11); V. C. H. Berks. II., 191.

² Parker, 45.

CHAPTER XIII

THE FIRST AGRARIAN REVOLUTION

IN the last chapter we have been considering the economic causes which led to the gradual disappearance of the servile condition of the peasants, and so to the break up of the manorial system ; we have now to consider under what circumstances the common fields, the symbol of the village community, came to be abandoned, in fact how tenure in commonalty gave way to tenure in severalty.

The change was one of vital importance, and had marked economic effects upon the whole country-side, while its results upon the relative social status of the different classes of society was no less remarkable. Such a change was in truth a revolution, and such it has been termed by students of economic history. But, like many other revolutions in this country, which in this respect differs from most others, this revolution came about gradually, without violence and not by legal enactment on an appointed day. The changes took place village by village and manor by manor, often by mutual agreement among the interested parties ; only towards the close of the movement was parliamentary aid invoked, and then only in a permissive sense.

Economists recognise two distinct periods at which these changes took place, each separated from the other by more than a century, during which conditions remained comparatively stationary. The first of these was chiefly in the sixteenth century, and was induced largely by the rapid growth of the woollen industry, due in the main to the use of improved water power ; this is called the first Agrarian Revolution. The second

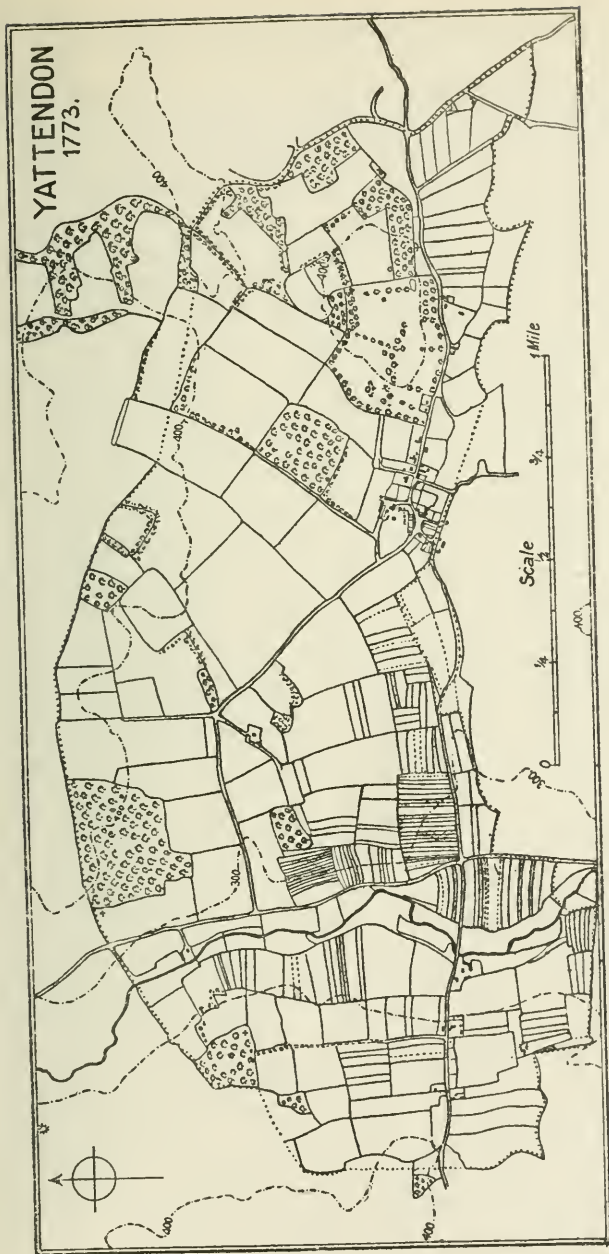


FIGURE IX

THE MANOR OF YATTENDON, SHOWING ENCLOSURES BY PRIVATE ARRANGEMENT

agrarian revolution began about 1730 and lasted to 1845, and seems to have been the direct result of a further industrial development, due to the use of coal and steam for power, in other words what is known as the Industrial Revolution. In this chapter it is our intention to inquire into the causes of the First Agrarian Revolution, which may be considered as having lasted from 1450 to 1600, and these are closely bound up with the economic causes that led to the decay of the manorial system.

We have seen that it was not uncommon for the land assarted from the waste after the Norman Conquest to be let in severalty, and that this change enabled the energetic and far-seeing tenant to cultivate the land more highly than was possible under the common-field system, and so to make larger profits. As time went on the better results obtained from these assarts became an object lesson to other tenants; but the peasantry are habitually conservative and suspicious of changes, and it was long before they desired any reforms. Moreover, the common-field system was a complicated interlacing of mutual advantages and responsibilities, which had reached a stable equilibrium after countless centuries of experiment, so that it was felt to be too great a task to undertake reforms, which to many would savour of sacrilege. It is true that even as early as the thirteenth century we find evidence of a desire among the more forward peasants to enclose their acres in the common fields, but as this would have deprived the rest of the community of the privilege of pasturing their cattle upon the stubble of the enclosed acres, such attempts were sternly repressed by the manorial courts.¹

Some vast and irresistible force was necessary to induce the peasant even to desire a change, much less to undertake it, and throughout the Middle Ages he was too poor and too ignorant to take any initiative. At the dawn of the Renaissance, when his servile condition was disappearing, and schools were

¹ V. C. H. Berks. ii. 183; Azzize R. 37 (Reading 25 Hen. III.).

being founded throughout the land, his mind began to be prepared for the plunge. Still a force was required to induce him to make the effort, and this force was supplied by the wool trade.

We have seen that as early as the time of William the Conqueror wool had been exported to Flanders, and that this trade increased in the thirteenth century and still more in the fourteenth. The increased production of wool seems to have been due to causes that we have already touched upon. The common-field system, however valuable as a system involving mutual help, was bad from an agricultural standpoint, as there was no incentive to improved cultivation, and high farming was an impossibility. The land, too, was inadequately manured, for the practice of stall-feeding had not been introduced, and of course artificial manures were unknown. The common fields, which had been cultivated without interruption for many centuries, in some cases for nearly fifteen hundred years if not for a still longer period, were becoming exhausted, and the crops were poor and declining in value.

On the other hand, largely owing to the increase in foreign trade, the standard of living was rising, and more money was required by lord and peasant alike. This money could be more easily acquired by the sale of wool than by the disposal of corn, for the Flemish weavers seem to have been able to absorb all the raw material that this country could export, while the population of the English towns was still small, and each town had its common fields, which, partially at least, provided for the needs of its citizens.

It was only natural, then, that more attention should be paid to sheep-farming than to corn-growing, for therein the greater profits were to be obtained. So the exports to Flanders continued to increase. Then came the Black Death, and following it a great reduction in the population. Many lands, as we have seen, went out of cultivation for lack of men to till them, and the peasants,

suffering from a serious shortage of labour, reduced to a minimum the corn-growing, which involved much labour, and threw their energies into sheep-rearing, which required much less. Thus wool rather than corn came more and more to be the chief item of production, and even at this date it became clear that the future of England lay rather in industry than in agriculture.

We have seen that after the peasants' revolt the manorial system broke down completely, the peasants became no longer tied to the land, and labour became more mobile. Tillage was on the decline as sheep rearing became more profitable, and as the population began to increase again the country became flooded with a large amount of free labour. This at first became a serious menace to law and order, for the unemployed were traversing the country in search of work and food, and many enactments had to be made to control these rogues and vagabonds, terms which had not then acquired their opprobrious significance, and meant merely waifs and strays. The same causes led to the first foundation of the poor law.

So much free labour and so many unemployed caused labour to be cheap, for there is ample evidence that at this time large numbers were on the verge of starvation. This ready supply of cheap labour suggested to some the propriety of starting home manufactures, instead of exporting all the raw materials to Flanders, and so our woollen industry arose, and we began to export manufactured articles.

But the woollen industry had made a beginning in this country some years earlier. In the year 1328 the Flemish artizans had revolted, in other words there had been a great strike among the operatives in Flanders, but the strikers were defeated at Cassel. During the next ten years many of these migrated to this country and settled for the most part in East Anglia, from whose ports most of the English wool had been exported. By

1337 the worsted industry was well established in East Anglia, and it would seem that the cloth industry arose in the West of England soon afterwards.

Early in the fifteenth century the industry seems to have reached Berkshire, as the Downland in the west of the county produced an ample supply of sheep. About this time we find big clothiers from the west purchasing manors in the neighbourhood of Newbury, or accumulating vast estates, made up to a great extent from the waste of several manors. For instance, John Rogers, who came from Bryanstown in Dorset, and is said to have been a clothier, purchased in 1425 the manors of Benham Valence and Enborne.¹ There is an extent of the Manor of Benham Valence of about this date, probably taken at the time of the purchase²; this gives amongst others a list of the tenants at Westbrook. All of them paid rents in money, and though some are specifically termed free tenants, implying the servile condition of the remainder, there are no services specified as due to the lord. There is also a reference to a fulling mill at Westbrook, called Gosling's Mill, which indicates that spinning and weaving were carried on in this village, though probably as home industries.

A few years later, about the year 1450, there was born at Winchcombe in Gloucestershire one John Smallwood. The clothing industry seems to have been established at Winchcombe for some years, and it would appear that John Smallwood had learned the elements of the trade in his native town. As a young man he migrated to Newbury, where he was apprenticed to a clothier, which shows us that the industry was established here at that time. Here he became known as John from Winchcombe, or John Winchcombe, and in time became a great master clothier, and his history as Jack of Newbury is well known.³

¹ Cat. Anc. Deeds. (State Papers), i. B. 365.

² Hen. VI. Rentel de Benham. P.R.O.

³ The Pleasant History of John Winchcomb, etc., London N.D., reprinted in Newbury.

As the clothing industry in England increased, and the demand for wool became greater, the lords devoted more attention to sheep farming and less to tillage. Their attention was devoted more to the waste in which the sheep were pastured than to the common fields in which the corn was grown, and the waste became more valuable than the fields. By the middle of the fifteenth century this began to be realised, and soon lords began to throw, first of all, the assarts, and then some of the acres of the common fields into the waste to increase the sheep-run. Thus more land went out of cultivation and more peasants were compelled to leave the land and to migrate into towns, thereby exchanging an agricultural life for an industrial. Meanwhile the towns, which were unable to spread as they were hemmed in by their common fields, became more and more crowded, and their inhabitants were faced with an acute housing problem. Local tradition has it that at this time the people were actually camping in the streets of Newbury, and it may well have been so considering the number of tenements in the neighbouring villages which had been destroyed by 1517. It seems probable that it was at this time that the burgesses had compassion upon the poor homeless refugees, and permitted them to settle in their outbuildings, or erected for them hovels in their gardens, thus forming the mass of courts and blind alleys which disfigure Newbury and most other market towns in this country.

This destruction of tenements and agricultural lands was a serious menace to the country's food supply, and alarmed the Food Controllers of the period. Acts were passed in 1489, 1515, 1516, 1534, 1536, 1552, 1555-6, 1563 and 1597, but all to no avail; the practice of making sheep-run out of arable land continued, in spite of Acts of Parliament, as long as it paid to do so, and only ceased when such actions became no longer profitable. In 1517 a survey was made of lands which had recently been laid waste, and many instances of this practice are cited from the neighbourhood of Newbury, especially at Boxford and

Greenham.¹ Nevertheless the practice still continued, the villages declined in population and the towns became more and more congested.

It was about this time, it is believed, that a large number of the common fields became enclosed and converted from commonalty to severalty. The change took place by mutual arrangement and not by Act of Parliament. Either the peasants came to a mutual agreement and exchanged their land so as each to possess large blocks of contiguous acres, or more often the lord contrived by purchase or other arrangement to acquire all the rights of the peasants, and then to let them on lease separate farms in severalty. (See Figure ix, page 169.)

The enclosures of the common fields took place at this date almost universally in the counties situated in the extreme south-east and in the west of the country, and the bulk of the intermediate zone remained unenclosed until much later. In Berkshire such enclosures were rare, for there was still a vast amount of unploughed Downland, besides large areas of heathland on the plateau gravels, and both of these areas were very suitable for sheep runs. Still enclosures there seem to have been, besides devastated arable lands where little Downland or heath existed.

Perhaps one of the reasons why enclosures were comparatively rare at this time in Berkshire and some other southern counties, was that the land was naturally suitable for corn growing; it remained mainly a corn growing country from 1877 to 1914, when so many other parts of England had been laid down to grass. With a chalky sub-soil the soil had not deteriorated to so great an extent as had been the case elsewhere, and it seems that from an early date it had been customary to renew its vigour by top dressings of freshly dug chalk.

Some village lands, however, even in this county, seem to have been enclosed at this date, though direct evidence of this has not been found. Judging, however,

¹ Leadam (1897), 117, 118, 119.

by negative evidence we must assume that Winterbourne, Donnington, Bagnor and Brimpton, at any rate, among the villages surrounding Newbury, were enclosed before the end of the sixteenth century.¹

It is by no means clear why the south-east of England and many portions of the western counties were the first to adopt the practice of enclosure. It is possible that the regions near London may have been more advanced in their agricultural outlook and that this may have been the cause of their early enclosure. On the other hand the area thus early enclosed coincides with the Tertiary beds of the Thames basin and the clays of the Weald. The latter area was only recovered from the forest in late times, and seems never to have had a common-field system. The greater part of the Tertiary beds are clay, and some are further covered with glacial boulder clay. It is possible, therefore, that these areas, too, were first cultivated in comparatively late times. Still, as Dr. Slater has shown,² common fields did at one time exist within this area, especially near Colchester and in the east of Kent, where Thanet sands predominate, yet most of these disappeared at an early date.

The problem requires further investigation on the spot, but to judge from the geological evidence, and that obtained from a study of the distribution of saxon grave-yards, it would appear that the greater part of this area was dense woodland, and only here and there were there any settlements until late Saxon or even later times. The exceptional spots seem to be those where chalk and sands prevail, and here, too, we find evidence of Saxon and earlier settlements. The common-field system was not, then, general throughout this area, or if communities did exist they were of the forest rather than of the valley type, and this form, as we have seen, appears to have been the last to have been formed and the first to disappear. The same early disappearance of the

¹ Slater (1907), 269, 270.

² *Ibid.*, 213, 231.

common fields occurred also on the Tertiary beds of the Hampshire basin, which seems to confirm the view that the geological conditions and the vegetation which followed them were in some measure the cause of the early enclosures.

In the western counties the case is different. Here the areas which were subject to early enclosure were the latest to be settled by the Saxons, and presumably the latest also to be occupied by their predecessors. The land is mostly mountainous or at least hilly, and more suitable for pasturage than for the growing of corn. Here we might expect the moorland communities to linger later than in the plain, and, although we have undoubted evidence that the common-field system did exist within these western counties, it is far from certain that it was universal. Whether this were so or not, its introduction was probably late, and in consequence it tended to disappear early.

The enclosure of the common-fields made it possible for the villages to expand, and where this course had been adopted it was not uncommon for peasants to erect new and more commodious dwellings upon one of their acres which abutted on a road. Where there were many cottiers it not infrequently happens that a number of such cottages are found, each standing at the end of a small close containing an acre.

The great increase in wealth which came with the settled conditions of Tudor times caused much rebuilding of houses. The new aristocracy erected for themselves beautiful mansions of stone, brick or timber framing, usually in deer-parks on the waste. Meanwhile the peasants, now becoming prosperous copy-holders, built similar houses on a smaller scale, while even the cottiers had houses, usually timber-framed with brick-filling, containing at least two rooms downstairs and two above. A great many of the cottages and farm houses, which are still in use, date from this time, though some have been added to or altered in later days.

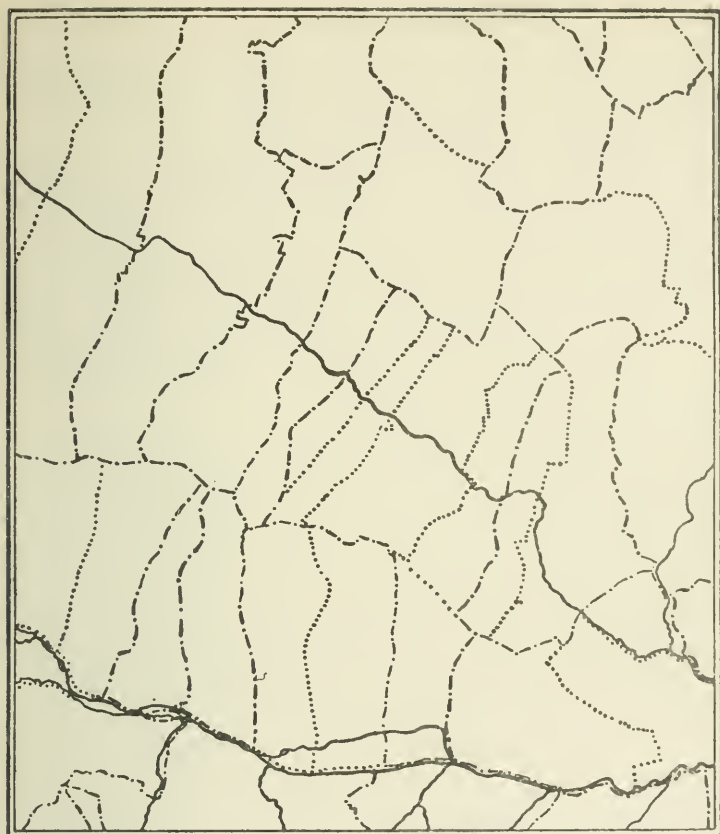
CHAPTER XIV

THE PARISH AS A CIVIL UNIT

WE have seen that during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries the manorial system was decaying throughout the land. In many places the common fields and waste were becoming enclosed and passing from commonalty to severalty, and in these cases the manor courts were no longer necessary and ceased to be held. Even where the enclosure had not taken place the jurisdiction of the courts had become in practice curtailed, and the courts had more and more taken the form of a rent audit. The manorial system as such had disappeared, the village community system was gone also in some regions while in others it was but a shadow of its former self.

Up to this time all local government, excepting the business of the County and Hundred, had been performed by the manorial lords, either with or without the assistance of their courts, and the administration of the Hundreds had gradually become merely a replica of manorial jurisdiction, and the lord of the Hundred held a court which was scarcely distinguishable from a manorial court. Thus with the disappearance of these courts there was no person or body on which might be thrust the responsibility of dealing with matters of strictly local concern. If some change had not taken place public business of this type would have been at a standstill, or would have been handed over to the Earl and the Viscount, or to the Lord-lieutenant and the sheriff as they were now being called.

Meantime under the Tudors the population and the prosperity of the country were increasing rapidly, the conditions of Society were changing, and fresh problems



Parish Boundaries.— — — — — *Township Boundaries.*.....
0 1 2 3 4 Miles

FIGURE X
COMPOSITE AND DIVIDED PARISHES

arose which called for local solution. Thus public business was on the increase, though it differed considerably from that of former centuries.

For instance, in the self-contained manor of earlier times the community had provided for the necessities of all its members. It is true that this meant a bare subsistence only, but under the manorial system no member of the community could be homeless, unclad or starving. Everyone, save a few outlaws, was a member of a Township, be it a village or a town, and as such a member of its community, and dependent on the other members in sickness or old age.

But as the manorial system decayed all this was changed. The peasants were no longer bound to the soil and labour became mobile, and there arose a number of wandering labourers, who traversed the country offering their services to the highest bidder, and so lost their connection with the Township of their origin. These became known as rogues and vagabonds, terms which originally bore no adverse meaning, but merely indicated the mobile nature of the men to whom they were applied. While some bettered their prospects and became prosperous farmers or traders, others fell upon evil times, and having no community to support them were frequently on the verge of starvation. This condition led them, as starvation always does, to be a terror to their more prosperous neighbours and a menace to law and order, and so the terms rogue and vagabond grew to have a sinister meaning.

Many enactments were made between 1390 and 1600 to control the actions of these vagrants, and to provide them with at least a bare sustenance; these enactments became the basis of the Poor Law.¹ The aim of the legislators was to force them back to community life, and to cast the responsibility for their maintenance upon the community that bore them, and so arose that principle which survived long in the Poor Law, known as

¹ Nicholls (1854), i. 60, 193 and seqq.

“Settlement,” by which every pauper had to be returned to the place of his birth.

Now the original community responsible for the support of the poor was the manor, or more properly speaking, the township out of which it arose. But manors were fast disappearing, and their administrative machinery was decaying even where they survived. The township, too, was losing its community and its communal spirit, and even its bounds were disappearing, except in the west of England, where these units still in a great measure survive.

Yet an area was needed to which these rogues and vagabonds could be sent, and upon which the responsibility of their maintenance could be thrust. As the manor and township became more and more impossible, a new area was necessary, and by the close of the sixteenth century it became customary for this and other like responsibilities to be placed on the Parish. Thus by slow degrees the Parish became a civil unit, and succeeded to the functions formerly performed by township or manor, while the Vestry, the one meeting of all the parishioners, came to undertake certain public duties similar to those formerly performed by the manorial courts.

Now the Parish was originally an ecclesiastical unit, the area under the ecclesiastical jurisdiction of a Parish Priest, and one which paid tithes and other dues to a particular church. It mattered not that there was more than one place of worship within the area, for if all the tithes and dues were payable to one, and all the dead had to be buried in the churchyard adjoining it, that building and that alone was known as the *ecclesia* or church, and each of the others a *capella* or chapel, a term which in early days carried no separatist connotation.

As in the case of the manor, the parish was in theory the township, and was and still is frequently coterminous with that area. But just as the township is the area from the community's standpoint, and the manor that from the lord's, so the parish was the same area from the

standpoint of the Church and the Priest. Though this was the case in theory it was by no means always so in practice. As in the case of manors, the parish might consist of a number of townships, or a fraction of one. If the district was poor, the township small or the manors large, it was usual for the parish to contain a number of townships, and this was more particularly the case in the western counties, where forest communities were common, and where parishes exist containing as many as thirty townships.

Where an ancient and powerful Abbey existed it was not uncommon for that ecclesiastical foundation to acquire the tithes and other perquisites of the church, and to retain what were known as the great tithes, those from corn especially, and to place in charge of the cure a Vicar, who received the vicarial or small tithes, mainly those from hay. Some monasteries were expert at tithe-grabbing, and their chronicles record with much satisfaction some actions of this nature¹; sometimes two establishments came into conflict over the tithes of one particular area, and the case had to be tried in the High Court, from the records of which we gather interesting particulars of such transactions.² Where the tithes of several adjoining townships came into the hands of the same monastery it was usual to combine these into one parish with one church, regardless of the inconvenient shape of the area or the wishes of the inhabitants, though on the other hand we have the case of a population of squatters on the waste of a township refusing to attend the parish church, so that the Abbey authorities constituted this area a separate parish.³

Where the population was comparatively dense and prosperous, as it was in East Anglia, we have seen that it was not uncommon for a township to be divided into as

¹ cf. Chron. Monast. Abingd. *passim*.

² For a description of a case in the Ecclesiastical Court between the Prior of Oseney and the Rector of Welford, who was appointed by the Abbey of Abingdon, about certain tithes at Alinton or Elton, see The Oseney Cartulary, a MS. at Christ Church, Oxford.

³ Chron. Monast. Abingd. ii., 31.

many as five manors, and in these cases it was usual, though not invariably so, for each manor to become a parish. And just as the different manors in a township were generally distinguished by adding the name of the lord, so the different parishes were distinguished by the addition of the name of the Saint to whom the church was dedicated. Thus we may have the manors of Letcombe Regis and Letcombe Basset, and the parishes of Ogbourne St. Michael and Ogbourne St. George.

It is usually stated that all our parish boundaries date from the time of Theodore, who was Archbishop of Canterbury from 664 to 690, but this is clearly a misunderstanding of what took place. Apart from the fact that Theodore's jurisdiction covered only part of the country, much of which was in a very unsettled state until long after his time, we have positive evidence of the change of such boundaries many centuries later. It seems probable that Theodore introduced the custom of parishes, and parish priests, instead of the previous custom of depending upon wandering missionaries, that is to say he laid down the ideal that the country should be divided for ecclesiastical purposes into areas, each of which should be under jurisdiction of an appointed officer. He doubtless attempted to apply this principle as far as was possible at that time, but in this he can have been only partially successful, for much of the land was still pagan.

We have clear evidence that parish bounds were still considered mutable at a much later date, and even after the Norman conquest some lords claimed the right to pay their tithes to whom they willed. Thus Bernard de Neufmarché, lord of Speen, gave the tithes from that manor to the Priory of Aufay in 1079,¹ while Humfrey Vis de Lew, lord of Benham, and Humfrey the Chamberlain, lord of Bagnor, seem to have acquiesced in the tithes of their manors going with those of Speen, and so these townships passed into Speen parish. But a part of the township of Benham was not included in the main

¹ Ordericus Vitalis, vi. 5.

manor of Benham or East Benham, and the Abbey of Abingdon claimed that it had been granted to them in 956. They failed to make good this claim before the Domesday Commissioners, but on the death of the free tenant they persuaded one of the sons to grant them his portion of the land and the other to grant them the tithes issuing from the remainder.¹ Thus they acquired control over the tithes of all this portion, known subsequently as Hoe Benham, and attached this area to their church at Welford, thereby making a parish of an exceedingly inconvenient shape.

In the reign of Henry I Walkelin Vis de Lew held the manors of Speen, East Benham and Westbrook, and endeavoured to transfer the tithes of the last-named township to the church of Speen. But the Abbey of Abingdon claimed that the tithes and other dues arising from Westbrook had pertained from time immemorial to the parish church at Boxford, and appealed to the king, who had been educated at their house; the appeal was, of course, successful, and Westbrook is still in the parish of Boxford.²

The neighbouring township of Winterbourne was at one time a parish, but in the reign of Henry I the same Abbey persuaded Norman, the lord, to leave them his tithes; these they attached to the adjoining parish of Chieveley, which belonged to them, and Winterbourne passed into the parish of Chieveley, and its church became a chapel.³ It is still in the ecclesiastical parish of Chieveley, and is considered as an ancient chapelry, though it was made a distinct civil parish early in the nineteenth century. Thus we see that as late as the twelfth century changes were made in the bounds of four adjoining parishes in south-west Berkshire.

We see, then, that the parish of the Middle Ages, or Ancient Parish as it is usually called, was, like the manor

¹ Chron. Monast. Abingd. ii. 145.

² *Ibid.* ii. 122.

Ibid. ii. 169.

of the same date, sometimes a township and at others consisted of an accidental aggregate of townships or parts of townships. The township was a definite agricultural unit, having definite shape and structure, and formed for the convenience of the peasants who inhabited it. The manor was an aggregate of such units formed solely for the convenience of the lord, while the parish was either based upon the manor or formed for the convenience of the tithe-owner, who, in these cases, was usually a monastic institution. (See Figure x, page 179.)

As the manor decayed and the township lost its communal consciousness, the ancient parish gradually took their place, and became the administrative unit. It remains so still, though during the nineteenth century there have been some changes, a few amalgamations and many subdivisions. In some of the western counties, especially in Cheshire, the townships became converted into parishes for administrative purposes, and are termed civil parishes, and in some of these cases the bounds have been more recently rectified to provide more compact units. The same change has taken place to a lesser degree in other parts of England, and during the nineteenth century three such civil parishes, Winterbourne, Leckhampstead and Cold Ash, have been created in the immediate neighbourhood of Newbury.

Between the years 1600 and 1730 very few enclosures seem to have taken place. There was sufficient waste for sheep run to meet the needs of the home manufactures, and the export of wool to foreign lands had ceased. The corn-lands of England were sufficient to feed the population, which was not increasing as rapidly as it had done in Tudor times, for it has been estimated that the total population of England and Wales in 1600 was about five millions, while in 1740 it had only risen to about six and a half millions.¹ There was not much

¹ Census Population of Great Britain, 1841. Introductory remarks containing Mr. John Rickman's "Estimated Population of England and Wales, 1570-1750." He estimates the population of England and Wales in 1600 as 4,811,718 and in 1750 as 6,517,035.

inducement, therefore, to high farming, and fresh enclosures of the common lands were few and far between.

On those manors where no enclosures had taken place the manorial courts still continued to be held, but with ever diminishing powers. They still retained their old form, the tenants still paid homage to their lord, but these mediæval acts had been reduced to a mere survival. Rents were now paid in lieu of services, and leases, usually for three lives, which had become usual in the case of demesne lands towards the close of the fourteenth century, now became the rule for peasant holdings also. The leases were granted at the manor courts and were held by "copy of court roll," and thus arose the custom of copy-hold tenure, which is still to be found in existence upon some manors, especially on those held by the Duchy of Lancaster.

The tenants were still divided, nominally at least, into two classes, free and customary, but it does not appear that the latter term in any way implied servile status. It was merely a survival of legal terminology, for the law is ever slow to change its forms; the name implying serfdom was still retained but the custom had long since vanished. All tenants, both free and customary, paid a money rent for their holdings, though it was becoming increasingly common for tenants, especially copy-hold tenants, to pay large sums to obtain their leases, while the annual rent became proportionately smaller. Thus copy-hold tenure became more and more to resemble freehold tenure, though usually limited to a term of lives, while the rent became reduced to a mere acknowledgment.

Meantime the parish vestry was growing in importance as it gradually absorbed the functions formerly performed by the manorial courts. Originally a meeting of parishioners to decide affairs pertaining to the upkeep and repair of the parish church, it met in the vestry, whence its name, and the incumbent or priest presided *ex-officio*. As the manor courts disappeared or decreased

in importance, all kinds of matters of local interest were discussed and acted upon by the Vestry Meeting. Interesting items of a varied nature are often to be found in the minutes of these meetings or Churchwardens' Accounts, as they are usually called, but in regions like Berkshire, where many of the common fields, and in consequence manorial courts, persisted until the beginning of the nineteenth century, these items are not so numerous or so interesting as may be met with in the books of other parts, where early enclosures were the rule.

By degrees such matters as the administration of the Poor Law and the repair of the highways became allotted to the parish rather than to the manor or township, until by degrees all local functions became vested in it, and it became the recognised unit for all kinds of minor affairs throughout the kingdom.

During the early part of this period but little change occurred in the dwellings of the people, though some of the older houses were rebuilt on more modern lines. It was a period in which progress in the towns was more noticeable than in the country districts. After the Restoration, however, and still more after the Revolution, we find the country squires building still more luxurious houses in brick or stone, planting their parks with trees and laying out formal gardens. In all this we may notice foreign influence, especially that of the Court of Versailles.

Copy-holders were also growing more prosperous, and their houses also show signs of expansion, and, during the latter part of this period, of the substitution of brick buildings for those of timber-framing with brick filling. The smaller peasants were, however, not so prosperous, and were sinking gradually to the condition of farm labourers, and among their dwellings we notice little or no change.

CHAPTER XV

THE SECOND AGRARIAN REVOLUTION

DURING the seventeenth century, owing to the decline of the manorial courts, local administration tended to come more and more into the power of the lord, or the squire as he now came to be called. Attendance at the old manorial courts had been compulsory, and though this compulsion had for many years not been enforced, except by the imposition of a small fine upon the defaulter, the tenants had been in the habit of coming fairly regularly. On the other hand, attendance at the Vestry meeting was voluntary, and until the close of the Middle Ages the business had been exclusively ecclesiastical, and so the habit of coming regularly had not grown up. Thus it became possible for the squire, especially if he allied himself with the parson, as the priest had now become, to arrange matters much as he wished. There was also a tendency during this century to remove many matters of local concern from the immediate locality to the county, and the county authority was vested in the body of magistrates or the Commission of the Peace. Thus the squire, partly as a magistrate and partly as an influential member of and regular attendant at the Vestry, often became the autocratic ruler of the village.

During the early part of the seventeenth century the peasants retained still some measure of control, and the Civil War was to a certain extent a trial of strength between them and the squire. Though they were successful for a time, the Restoration in 1660 enabled the squire to regain lost ground, and after the Revolution of 1688, largely organised by the English squirarchy, his position became firmly fixed.

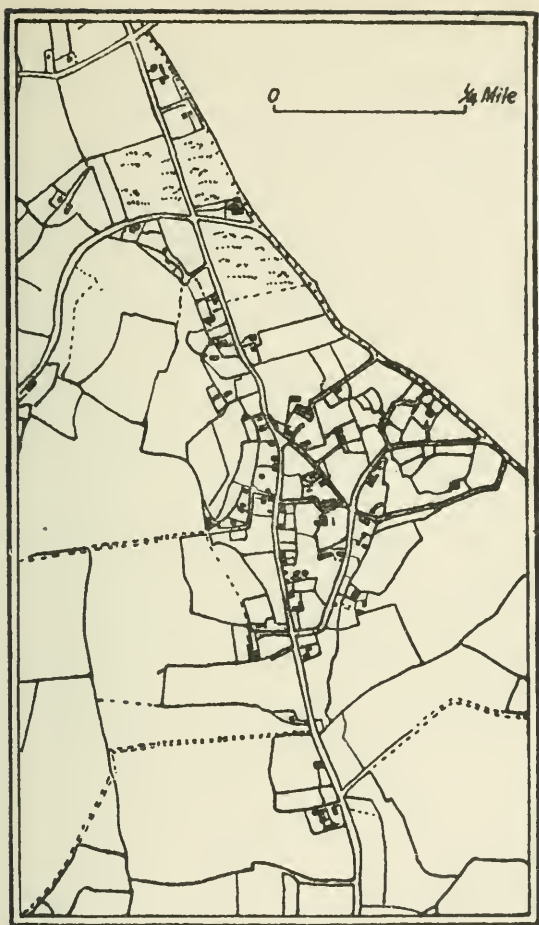


FIGURE XI
A SQUATTING VILLAGE ON THE EDGE OF A HEATH

During the early years of the eighteenth century this predominance of the squire increased. By a statute passed in 1710 only land owners could sit in parliament, and local affairs became more and more vested in the Commission of the Peace. In addition to the administration of law and justice and of other public affairs, the Justices also initiated changes in all matters relating to housing and wages, while their influence in the administration of the Poor Law was considerable.

The great strength of the squire's position lay in his permanence. Even if not always of pure Nordic descent, for by this time many individuals of the Beaker type had become manorial lords,¹ the squire had been brought up in the Nordic tradition. Life on the steppes, under patriarchal government, had deeply impressed upon the race the importance of the family, and in all their doings in subsequent times they had played for the advantage of the family rather than for that of the individual. In their early days in Western Europe they had implanted the system of primogeniture and patrilinear descent, leaving the system of ultimogeniture, or inheritance by the youngest, to peasants with Mediterranean traditions, and the equal division of property among all the children to those who adhered to Alpine methods, with their principle of share and share alike. The system of primogeniture was further enforced in the fifteenth century by the growth of deeds of settlement, and these grew in complexity and rigidity during subsequent centuries. By the eighteenth century the system of entail and marriage settlements made it almost impossible for an individual of the squire class to part with his landed property, though it was possible for him to mortgage and otherwise embarrass it.

Thus the squire, or rather his family, became a very permanent element in village politics, while the peasant, with his habit of equal division of property, was becoming

¹ In this connection cf. Keith (1915), 16.

less so. Even though the Beaker type was becoming commoner after the middle of the seventeenth century, as is seen from family portraits of the eighteenth century, the Nordic point of view persisted. Should any one from another class become one of their number, should a successful lawyer or wealthy merchant purchase an estate, they lost no time in absorbing the newcomer, or at any rate his eldest son. This was effected partly by inter-marriage, so that the lordly blood ran in the veins of the parvenu's descendants, and with the blood went the tradition; partly too by the effect of social environment. The society of squires, or County Society, was an exclusive body, and being powerful and rich, with much prestige, new landowners sought entrance to the privileged circle, or if they disdained such snobbery, their wives saw to it that they conformed to its rules sufficiently to enable their ladies to be included in the charmed circle. Thus few resisted the influence, and the lawyer or merchant attempted, if not always successfully, to out-squire the squire, while his son behaved as to the manner born.

Perhaps the most potent influence in developing this lordly point of view was the tradition of the Public Schools, which about this time were rising and disentangling themselves from the mass of Grammar Schools which catered for other members of society. Founded primarily for the sons of the poor, or at any rate of the middle classes, these schools were becoming select, and restricting their benefits to those of the squirarchy and their younger brothers. These schools aimed less at inculcating learning than at training character, and by this they understood the training of youth to lead and to govern. Their ideal was eminently Nordic, and at them the young squires, like the sons of the Persian nobles of old, were trained to ride and shoot and speak the truth.¹ The sons of the parvenus were sent to these schools, and such elements of the Nordic point of view

¹ Herodotus, i. 136.

as they failed to assimilate at home were inculcated at these places of learning.

Thus the squire became the autocratic ruler of the village, and though his rule was just, as seems always to be the case with Nordic rule, and for the most part kind-hearted, as was to be expected from so great an infiltration of Beaker blood, the administration of local affairs tended to favour their own interests or those of their families, and sometimes, too, those of the larger tenants, with whom they were desirous of keeping on the best of terms. On the other hand, their rule was disastrous to the smaller tenants, whose point of view they failed to understand, but they checked any expression of dissatisfaction on their part with a plentiful supply of doles and charity. The squires entered into an alliance with the parsons, who were often their younger brothers or sons, and together they acted as competent, if short-sighted, but at the same time benevolent tyrants.

Two classes only felt their united displeasure. True to the Nordic tradition the squire was before all else a sportsman, and sport on the waste, or for that matter elsewhere on his domain, was for him alone. This, which had been his by prescription from the earliest days, and later secured to him by grants of free warren, was now granted to him afresh by a law enacted in 1670.¹ The parson's monopoly was in "religion," secured to him by the Act of Uniformity, and in this case he could brook no rivalry. So although their combined rule was in most cases mild, there was no mercy for poachers and dissenters.

Let us now look at the economic developments of agriculture at this time. In 1688 the squires became dominant in parliament, and the next year passed the Corn Bounty Act, which granted a bounty of five shillings a quarter upon exported wheat, if the home price did not exceed forty-eight shillings. There were higher import

¹ Paterson (1861), 1-83.

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duties, and the importation of foreign cattle was prohibited, so that the price of corn tended to remain level and agriculture benefited.

The prosperous state of agriculture led again to a desire for high farming, and this was further encouraged by another change which was coming over the country. During the first half of the eighteenth century many attempts were made to increase production by the employment of machinery; this was especially noticeable in the textile industries. Early in the century the flying shuttle was invented, and soon afterwards water-driven machinery for "throwing" silk was introduced from Italy. Though the utilisation of steam power, following on Watt's invention of the steam engine, did not take place until the latter half of the century, the earlier half saw the beginning of that movement which is known as the Industrial Revolution. Already in the earlier years of the eighteenth century the population was beginning to increase, and there were more mouths to fill. This meant a vast increase in the demand for corn and other agricultural products. But improvement in agriculture and the growth of high farming enabled the farmers to keep pace with the increased demand for their products, and the country succeeded in feeding itself until the close of the century.

One of the results of the revival of learning, which had begun in earnest in the Mediterranean countries during the fifteenth century and had reached this country during the sixteenth, was to cause many men to observe and inquire into the processes of nature, and thus to lay the foundations of the natural sciences. At first these studies were carried out by individuals acting mainly for themselves, but as the seventeenth century advanced, scientific students began to collect together and to compare notes, and in 1645 some of these founded the Royal Society. For some time the progress of the new scientific thought was slow, but during the last quarter of the seventeenth century it gained momentum, and

during the eighteenth it began to affect every aspect of industrial life.

Quite early in the eighteenth century many scientific men were turning their attention to the improvement of agriculture. Jethro Tull, born in 1674, came in 1709 to live at Prosperous Farm in Shalbourne, near Hungerford, and died there in 1741. He invented a drill and was the author of "Horse-hoeing Husbandry." Lord Townshend (1674-1738) reclaimed vast areas of fenland, and improved unproductive sands by the application of marl; he also introduced the four-coursed system of husbandry. Bakewell (1725-1794) improved the breeds of sheep, while at the same time Charles Colling (1751-1836) did the same for cattle.

These are some of the more prominent of the early scientific farmers, but there were others who, if they did not actually make new departures, were great supporters of the movement for the better cultivation of the land. Among them I will only mention two: Coke of Norfolk, the first Earl of Leicester (1752-1842), a great East Anglian landlord and farmer, and Arthur Young (1741-1820), who began life as a journalist but was a close student of agricultural matters, and became the secretary of the first Board of Agriculture; one might also mention William Cobbett (1762-1835), who was a constant advocate of enclosure.

All these scientific men, and especially Young, saw the need for improved methods of agriculture if the country was to continue to feed its rapidly increasing population. They saw the necessity of applying scientific knowledge to the cultivation of the soil, and above all, as a first step, they advocated the enclosure of the common fields and such part of the common waste as could be profitably cultivated, as a preparatory measure to more advanced methods of farming.

Thus about 1730 there began again a further series of enclosures. These were carried out sometimes by private agreement between the lord or lords and the

peasants, usually, however, under an Act of Parliament, either private or general ; so that we have records, more or less full, of these transactions. Sometimes the enclosure affected the common fields and meadows only, and sometimes it applied only to the waste ; more often it dealt with all the land within the manor or township, until in most places there was no land left which was not in the individual ownership of some person.

Occasionally in the early part of this period the enclosure was partial and was strictly a private arrangement between the lord and his tenants. A case like this took place at Westbrook about the year 1722. Now the township of Westbrook, although in the parish of Boxford, had been attached for manorial purposes since the reign of Edward the Confessor to the adjoining township of Benham in the parish of Speen, and when the latter township had, about the time of the Conquest, or earlier, become divided into two, East Benham and Hoe Benham, Westbrook remained attached to East Benham. During the reign of Richard I, or perhaps earlier, a family called Lovell acquired certain lands in the manor ; they were probably free tenants, or more probably lords elsewhere, who had acquired a free tenement in this manor by marriage. For a time the manor of East Benham was in the hands of the king owing to forfeiture, and the Lovells, who were manorial lords elsewhere, claimed that their lands in Benham constituted a manor, and as this was not disputed the lands became known as the manor of Benham Lovell. Henry III granted the manor of East Benham in 1251 to his half brother, William de Valence, from whom it took the name of Benham Valence, or Vallance, but Benham Lovell claimed to be a distinct manor, though its acres were intermixed with those of the other manor, and both claimed rights over the waste. The true status of Benham Lovell was never determined, and when in 1354 it came by purchase into the hands of the king, it became useless to pursue the matter further. As late as the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries we

we find the manorial courts of Benham Vallance claiming the head-penny from the tenants of Benham Lovell, who invariably ignored the demand.

The acres, as we have seen, were intermixed, and the larger portion of the Benham Lovell acres were in Westbrook, in which the lord of Benham Vallance held comparatively few. In 1722, Lord Craven, the lord of Benham Vallance, seems to have been anxious to dispose of his right in these outlying lands, and arranged with his tenants to redeem their acres, that is to say to purchase the freehold outright. This they did, but as most of them were intermixed with the acres of the tenants of Benham Lovell they were unable to enclose them. It so happened, however, that several of these acres were at the side of one of the common fields and their ends abutted on to the public road close to the village. These they were enabled to enclose, and on them they built little farms and cottages; but the rest of their land remained in the common fields until an Act was passed in 1814 for the enclosure of all the common lands in the parish of Boxford, which was carried out in 1820.

Between 1748 and 1825 there were twenty-two private enclosure acts passed for south-west Berkshire, affecting thirty-three or more townships. Then came the General Enclosure Act of 1845, but the work in this part of the country was all but done. Only one set of common fields remained, those belonging to the Borough of Newbury, these were enclosed in 1849, and the waste, known as Wash Common, was enclosed in 1855.¹

Much has been written about the enclosures of the common fields and waste, both in praise and blame, so that it is difficult for the student to appraise it at its real value. There is much to be said on both sides, and much depends upon the angle from which the problem is viewed.

There can be no doubt that the change from commonalty to severalty made it possible for the more scientific

¹ Slater (1907), 270.

farmers to improve their holdings, and it is difficult to see how this could have been effected in any other way. The enclosure of the waste frequently enabled lands, hitherto considered valueless, to be brought under cultivation. These improvements were not, of course, without precedent, for both objects had been to some extent attained in much earlier times by the assarts, which as we have seen, seem to have begun before the Norman Conquest and were of frequent occurrence during the first century after that event.

These improvements led to a considerable increase in the home food supply, a factor very necessary as the population was increasing and the country becoming industrial. Whether this additional food supply could better have been obtained from abroad must remain a matter of opinion, but one must remember that the importation of corn on a large scale was impossible before the days of steam ships, and even then difficult before the development of the corn lands in the middle west of North America. In any case it seems to have had another undeniably good effect, for it steadied the price of corn, for of all the economic evils from which the country had suffered during the centuries now under review, none was a more serious menace to its welfare than the constant fluctuations in the price of grain.

On the other hand, it has been pointed out that many serious evils were caused by these enclosures, though perhaps it might be urged in mitigation that these evils were due not so much to the enclosures themselves as to the way in which they were carried out. It is clear that these changes were good for the large man, whether owner or tenant, and were bad for the small tenant and absolutely disastrous for the small owner, owing to the relatively high cost of fencing his allotments. They were equally disastrous to the landless man, then a smaller number relatively than at present, for they deprived him of a number of small rights and privileges, customary though perhaps not strictly legal, of negligible money

value but of the greatest importance to one living on a bare subsistence wage. These, such as wood or turf for fuel, picking wool from briars, and other similar though rather vague privileges, made all the difference to those living always on the verge of starvation.

It may be argued with some force that these evils were due more to the method by which the enclosures were carried out than to the principle of converting commonalty into severalty. We have seen that the squire had become dominant in local affairs and tended to ally himself with his larger tenants; he had also the advantage of the advice of his family lawyer, and could discuss the advantage or disadvantage of this or that detail with his fellow squires either upon the bench or in the hunting field. The smaller men were not possessed of these advantages, and had long been losing touch with one another. Small wonder is it, then, that these changes were carried out to the advantage of the influential squires and their larger tenants, and that the smaller men came off badly.¹

But perhaps one of the greatest evils of the enclosure was that it completely destroyed the last vestiges of community life in the village. That this community ideal had long been decaying we have already seen; we find the seeds of that decay appearing early in the Middle Ages, and doubtless we should find still earlier evidence were our records less scanty. The individualistic propensities of the Nordic race, formed in his isolated farmstead in Scandinavia, were all against a community existence, and it is little wonder that such could not survive in England, where the population in all classes is more Nordic than in any other country except Sweden.

An interesting feature of this period was the rise of Heath villages. Of course there were squatters on the heaths and wastes at all times. Some may have been survivors of the old moorland communities of prehistoric

¹ Hammond (1920), 19-81.

times. This seems to have been the case on Wash Common, in the Borough of Newbury, where we have evidence pointing to a settlement on the hill-top in neolithic times or early in the bronze age, while at the time of the Domesday Survey there were eleven bordars, who cannot be accounted for except on the supposition that they dwelt there, while a similar number of cottages or small holdings around the common are shown on a map of 1761.¹

Squatting on the waste grew commoner as manorial courts began to lose their control, and this was more frequent when the lord was careless or lax in his administration or his seneschal incompetent. It is a common tradition among villagers, and I have met with it in various parts of England, that, if a cottage could be erected after sunset, and so far completed before the next sunrise that smoke could be seen issuing from the chimney, the cottage became the freehold of the builder.² It is asserted that neighbours would join together thus to erect a habitation for a newly married couple. The tradition seems to have no support in law, but it is singularly persistent, and I have frequently been told that a certain cottage at Wickham Heath, on what was the waste of Westbrook, was thus erected. From its small dimensions and humble style I can well believe it.

When the heaths thus squatted on were enclosed, the squatters received small allotments in consideration of their holdings, and thus a village of small holders, all of them free-holders, arose. But these villages, having grown up by individual squatting, have no plan, the cottages are often some distance from the road, and are approached by a narrow lane, and their formless condition enables one to recognise them at sight. An admirable example of this class of squatting village is Cold Ash,

¹ Willis, 1768.

² cf. Slater (1907), 119, where it is stated that this custom obtained in Montgomeryshire about one hundred and twenty years earlier. See also Palmer, and Owen (1910), 82.

which has grown up on the waste of the manor of Thatcham. (See Figure XI, page 189.)

In other cases the smallest freeholders, those who held from one to five acres in the common fields, received their allotments on a distant part of the waste, where the soil was peculiarly barren and unprofitable. It was not worth their while to fence in such poor land, even could they have afforded to do so, and the right to it was sold. Sometimes it was purchased by the lord, and added to his woods, but on other occasions it was bought by small speculators, who built thereon rows of small cottages, for which there was an ever increasing demand. Thus arose another type of heath village, less formless than the others, like Wickham Heath, which grew up on the wastes of Boxford and Westbrook.

These heath villages have produced sturdy inhabitants, known for their independence and for their skill in such rural arts as thatching and well-sinking. Being far from farms they rarely became farm labourers, and had to depend on other occupations to gain a living; thus arose a type, skilled with their hands, which has supplied many recruits to the building trade and the artizan population of the neighbouring towns. As their houses are frequently freehold, these men prefer to live in such villages, and nowadays may be found each morning starting early, on bicycles, for their distant work.¹

We have already seen that during the eighteenth century the squire sometimes shared the rule of the village with the parson, who was invariably the *ex-officio* chairman of the vestry meeting. At this period there were two very different types of clergy, the superior and inferior; on the one hand the beneficed clergy, whether rectors or vicars, and on the other hand the curates. The beneficed clergy were largely recruited from the younger sons of the squires, though there were certain families who held advowsons and became, as it

¹ Peake (1903), i. 83.

were, hereditary clerical families. Both these types were not uncommonly pluralists, that is to say held two or more livings. It was usual for such pluralists to live and take duty at one of their cures, though this was not invariably the case, while they paid a mere pittance to a curate to see to the others.

It was not an uncommon thing for one such curate to perform the duty in many parishes, riding on a Sunday from one to the other, visiting some only once in two or three weeks, while on week days he was engaged in teaching or some other non-clerical work.¹

Now the beneficed clergy of the eighteenth century often came from the family of the squire, and if they did not, usually behaved as if they had done so. They took little interest in those who had no status at the Vestry meetings, attendance at which was confined to rate-payers, that is owners or occupiers of land. The landless and the pewless, for the pews, too, were only allotted to ratepayers, were entirely neglected, as were the dwellers on the heath, who were looked upon rather as outlaws and pagans. The curates, riding from village to village on Sundays, and teaching at grammar-schools during the week, had little time to attend to the needs of these poor folk, and the Separatists, or Dissenters as they had now become called, with their Alpine ideals, were engaged with the problem of the urban populations, now growing urgent as the industrial Revolution progressed. No one cared for the landless man or the dweller in the heath village.

In 1717 arose the Methodist movement, started by John Wesley, himself a clergyman in the Church of England, and his brother Charles. These men wandered round the country, preaching to the landless and the heath dweller. Their appeal was not so much to the men of Alpine temperament, who had been attracted by the earlier Separatist movements, Independent and Baptist, as to the outcasts of the Nordic types. In the heath

¹ Archer-Houblon, 147.

villages especially these men had collected, with their love of wild life and open spaces, and here Methodism grew apace, and here still you may see evidence in the humble wayside brick chapels, so common in heath villages, of the fervour with which the new religious movement was accepted by this outcast population.

During this period of the dominance of the squire and the parson it is not surprising to find that few houses were rebuilt except the dwellings of these favoured classes. The rebuilding of manor-houses, begun after the Revolution, went on apace, as the number of Georgian mansions throughout the country testifies. Many of the richer clergy endeavoured to vie with the squire in the magnificence of their dwellings, and to build themselves lordly parsonages, sometimes in miniature parks, and it is largely to this period that we must attribute the erection of those palatial rectories, which are such an incubus to their poorer successors.

CHAPTER XVI

THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

HITHERTO we have been tracing the rise and the gradual decay of the Village Community in England ; in the last chapter we left it in a moribund condition, and in the nineteenth century we witness its decease. We have seen that since 1730 the economic conditions of the times were encouraging the enclosure of the Common Fields ; the high prices realised by grain during the time of the Peninsular War hastened this process. Few of them were left in 1820, and most of these were enclosed during the next few years ; so that, when the General Enclosure Act was passed in 1845 there were scarcely any Common Fields in existence except in the counties of Hertfordshire and Oxfordshire.

As we have seen, the change was not good for the small owner and the small tenant, as the expenses of fencing were disproportionate in these cases. It is important to ascertain the fate of these two classes of the population.

The more intelligent of the small owners lost no time in selling their land and investing their proceeds in War Loan, the five per cents. of those days, and in the education of their sons. Many had already been engaged in outside occupations, and had become in a small way surveyors, lawyers and bankers ; they had sent their sons into liberal professions, which were already growing in importance. They and their sons now definitely entered the ranks of professional men, and their descendants became clergy, officers in the army and navy, bankers, solicitors and to a less extent doctors ; many entered the higher ranks of the Civil Service, then growing rapidly as department was

added to department, and later became Civil Servants in India and the Colonies.

These people represented the *liberi homines* or free men of the Domesday Survey, and the Yeomen of Tudor times. They still retain a strong instinct for freedom

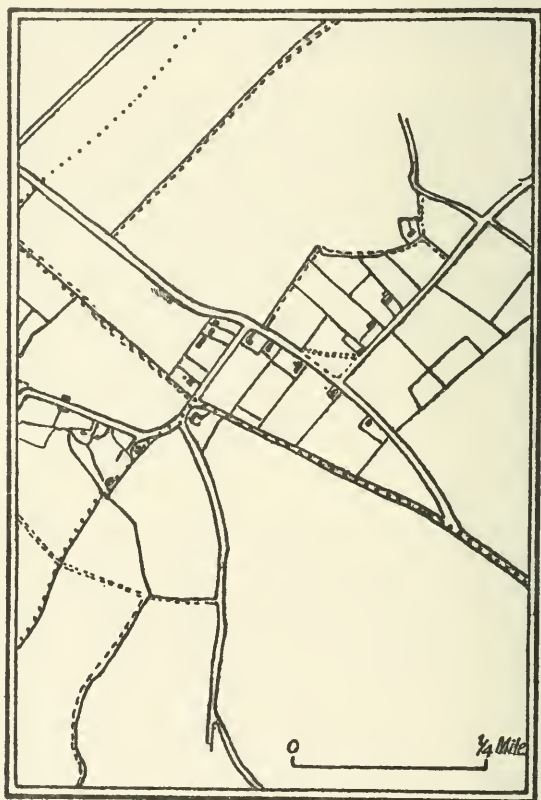


FIGURE XII

A HEATH VILLAGE ON A RECENTLY ENCLOSED COMMON.

and realise, perhaps more fully than other classes of the population, their duties to the State and the obligations of public service. As a class they are uncorruptible

and upright in their dealings, and they usually lack commercial instincts.

In the eastern counties, where such "free men" were unusually abundant, many became large tenant farmers, holding their farms from father to son in long succession. The eldest son succeeded to his father's farm, while the younger sons entered the Civil Service at home or abroad. Many of these have, in recent years, purchased their farms.

Others again of these small owners, perhaps the less intelligent, remained on the land as tenant farmers, but even now these may be distinguished from their neighbours by a certain indefinable "land-owning" tradition. Others in time sank lower and lower in the scale, until they became landless labourers; but the sense of freedom still survived in them, and their descendants may be distinguished from the general mass of farm labourers. They now demand and get small holdings, on which they are successful, and they are leaders of public opinion in Village Society.

The small tenant disappeared more slowly. Some left the land when the Common Fields were enclosed, but the majority remained for a time. The new conditions did not favour them, and their lot grew steadily worse. At length, during the third quarter of the century, when land was paying well, and the great landlords were reorganising their estates into large farms, these small men were crowded out, their fences were levelled and their buildings were demolished; by 1870 few vestiges of them or their holdings were left.

Many of these men and their sons migrated to the towns and joined the ranks of the skilled workers, for men of their stamp were badly needed in industrial areas during the expansion of trade which took place at this time. Here their descendants are leaders in Labour movements of all kinds, and form the backbone of the Trades Unions.

Some remained in the villages as blacksmiths, wheelwrights, thatchers and hay-tiers. They, too, became

leaders of local opinion, and sometimes found seats on the Parish Council. When the movement for small holdings began, they, too, applied for allotments, and in many cases have become very successful small holders.

The landless man had long been sinking. The mal-administration of the Poor Law at the hands of the Parish authorities, the indiscriminate doles and charities of Squire and Parson, had been sapping his independence and initiative. The so-called Speenhamland Act, and similar arrangements, which made allowances to depend on the size of their families, caused this type to multiply out of proportion to other sections of the community, until their numbers, and the incompetency and lack of initiative of most of them, had a depressing effect on the value of labour.¹

The descendants of these men are the lower type of agricultural labourers, with no stake in the land, no interest in the work they are doing. Wandering from farm to farm, and from village to village, they are hired for the year at the annual fair, and are in some parts known as "Michaelmassers." As each autumn goes by, one may see their small stock of furniture, yearly becoming less from constant moves, being carried from one village to another in a farm waggon. Subject to these constant moves they never make a home or live on terms of intimacy with their neighbours, nor do they ever cultivate, except most perfunctorily, the garden attached to their cottage. Their children are ill-nourished, and profit little by an education received each year in a different school from different teachers. Altogether their lot is a wretched one, and it is difficult to see what steps are to be taken to mend it.

The best members of this type leave for the towns, or sometimes for the Colonies, where some of them, perchance, succeed; many end their days in the back courts and alleys of the slums. The worst and most

¹ On the miserable lot of these men during the first half of the nineteenth century, see Hammond (J. L. and B.), *op. cit.* 217-300.

inefficient, for the most part, remain in the villages, where feeble-mindedness is rapidly increasing among them. Where the landlords are unenlightened and the cottages are unfit for human habitation, where farmers are ill-educated and wages are low, there this type will be found in large numbers. They are the despair of the social reformer, for it is difficult to help those who will not help themselves. The fixing of a minimum wage for the agricultural labourer, and the introduction of more complicated machinery, needing greater skill and intelligence to handle, will probably drive them finally from the villages, but they will disappear from the rural problem only to add to the complexities of the urban.

During the nineteenth century, as during the eighteenth, the interests of the landlord and of his larger tenants were the same, to keep up the price of corn and stock and to reduce the price of labour to as low a figure as possible. For this purpose they acted in unison and together exploited the labourer.

While the Napoleonic wars lasted they fared well, for prices were high, but after the victory at Waterloo a decline of prices set in, agriculture was depressed for fifteen years, and wages sunk almost to starvation point. In 1830 the labourers rose in revolt, but the rising was sternly repressed; many of the leaders were transported, the remainder were so cowed that they did not venture to rise again, and for nearly twenty years village life was in a lamentable condition.

In 1838 the Royal Agricultural Society was founded, and men's minds were again turned towards scientific farming, and the prospects of agriculture in this country began to improve. In 1849 the corn duties were removed and the price fell, but it recovered shortly afterwards, and a prosperous period set in, which lasted for a quarter of a century. Farming was now booming. The abler and more prosperous landowners began amassing large estates. They bought out such small owners as were left, purchasing the land at high prices. They

improved and drained the land, grubbed up the wide curving edges and laid out the now enlarged farms into great rectangular fields bounded by straight fences. Large farms became the order of the day, and the small holder finally banished. Thus landlord and farmer added acre to acre, and prospered until 1875.

But during these years the population of North America had been increasing rapidly, and railways had been developing there as well as here. This made it possible to cultivate enormous areas of prairie in the Middle West of that continent, where virgin land was ploughed for the first time, and corn could be produced with far less expense than in the partially exhausted wheat lands of the Old World. Added to this, great quantities of coal were being exported across the Atlantic, and the ships carrying this cargo could return laden with corn at a low rate of freightage. Thus between 1875 and 1877 the home market became flooded with vast quantities of corn, cheaply grown and cheaply carried, and prices began to drop with great suddenness.

Farming, from having been a most lucrative occupation, suddenly fell into a poor way, and farmers were wondering whether this change were temporary or had come to stay. While many were considering what to do, an epidemic of sheep-rot in 1879 destroyed millions of sheep, and cattle died in thousands from foot-and-mouth disease in 1883. This decided the future of many, and they gave up farming—bankrupt.

But the more intelligent of the large farmers, those who had entered the profession about 1859 with large stocks of capital, were wise enough to foresee what was coming, and they sold out at the first appearance of bad prices. The less educated farmers alone remained, and those who were not ruined within the first ten years, continued on their farms, becoming more and more involved financially as time went on. Many farms remained unlet, many estates came into the market and were sold at greatly depreciated prices.

A cry arose for small holdings, but fences had been grubbed up and farm buildings demolished. To replace these was a costly proceeding, and though a few large and wealthy landowners made a gallant attempt to do so, for the most part nothing was done. Successive governments passed legislation to encourage the increase of small holdings, but generally with but slight success. The man who could make a successful small holding was making more money in other ways. Many, with more enthusiasm for the land than experience in its cultivation, ventured to take these holdings and failed, and these failures discouraged others from making the attempt. Meanwhile landlord and tenant, at the end of their resources, endeavoured to obtain a protective tariff to raise the price of the commodities which they were producing, and tried to revive the protectionist policy of earlier days, camouflaging their proposals under the name of "Tariff Reform."

At the beginning of the century, as we have seen, the power in parliament and the government of the country was in the hands of the Squires. But as the industrial revolution was in full swing, the population of the towns was increasing, and there was arising a new class of men who had made their money as manufacturers and traders, the great Captains of Industry. These had long been restive under the domination of the Squires. Some had purchased landed estates and had become squires themselves, but others preferred to remain in the towns in which they had accumulated their wealth, and still desired a considerable share in the government of the country. From among these Captains of Industry, supported by many smaller urban capitalists, grew up the Liberal Party, and by 1830 they had attained sufficient strength to challenge the power of the Squires. In 1832 they passed the Reform Bill, which was followed by a number of similar reforms; then, to please the rank and file who had supported them, a further Franchise Act was passed in 1858, and thus the skilled worker in the

towns obtained some share in the government of the country.

These reforms, however, had but little effect upon the rural communities, for legislation during the middle of the nineteenth century was mainly directed towards improving the lot of the city-dweller. In 1884 the rural householders were enfranchised, which somewhat lessened the power of the Squire, and often set in his place, as member for the rural constituency, some rising barrister from London, who was glib in speech, promised many reforms, but had little real knowledge of the needs of the country labourer. Thus it has been till now; the rural districts are represented in Parliament either by a liberal townsman, anxious for reform but wholly ignorant of rural problems, or by a well-meaning Squire, who knows the district, but whose interests are bound up solely with those of other landowners or their larger tenants. We still lack members of parliament, or even candidates, who have an intelligent appreciation of the peasant's needs.

Local affairs of the larger order remained, as they had done since the seventeenth century, wholly in the hands of the Commission of the Peace, the body of Squires, who administered them efficiently and economically, but in the interests of the landowner and large tenant rather than of the small holder or landless labourer. In 1888 County Councils were established, and the effect of these has been on the whole for the good of the country side, although the duties cast of late upon these bodies are so numerous and varied that it has been found difficult in many counties to find enough men of sufficient ability, knowledge and leisure to attend to all these topics competently. To some extent this difficulty has been overcome by the co-option on to some committees of men with some special experience in the work involved, and much advantage might accrue by the extension of this principle.

Though in most rural constituencies the County Councillors are still largely drawn from the ranks of the

Squires, only the most competent as a rule serve in this capacity; those who are out of date and backward in their views are tending to sink into the back ground. The main work of the Councils is done in committee, and only those with a larger outlook have much influence in the committee room. In many counties, too, the lump of Squires has received a considerable leaven from the class of professional men, the representatives of the *liberi homines* of earlier days. These, bringing as they do much expert knowledge to the problems of administration, carry proportionately greater influence; thus the opinions of the Squires are much modified, and run less in the old ruts. Though the policy of rural County Councils has doubtless been unequal, and in many cases might well be advanced, it has, on the whole, been more favourable to the humbler sections of village folk than the rule of any of its predecessors.

The incompetence of the Parish to deal with Poor Law problems, as demonstrated by the report of the Commissioners in 1834, led to the creation of Poor Law Unions soon afterwards; this change, while it effected many much needed improvements, caused the Parish, as an administrative unit, almost to disappear. Various Highway Acts from 1838 to 1878 removed to Highway Boards the control of the roads, their last remaining function. The Vestry, too, by the act abolishing Church Rates in 1868, lost most of its actual powers, and, though it still remained for some years longer partially a civil body, its members ceased to take any interest in its proceedings, or to attend its meetings. Thus the Parish, like the Manor and the Township before it, ceased to be a living organism, except sometimes in its original ecclesiastical sense, and the community life of the English Village to all intents and purposes disappeared.

The creation of Parish Councils by the Local Government Act of 1894 was designed to revive it, but in most of the truly rural parishes this was but an attempt to breathe life into a corpse. Parish Councils under these

circumstances were too often dominated by the Squire and farmers or by the Parson and farmers, partly because the labourer was too indifferent to seek election, mainly because he was given to understand that the Council was no place for him. In rural England the Parish Councils have done little to revive the community spirit which has died of neglect and ill-usage, nevertheless it forms a nucleus around which such a spirit might arise.

But apart from the government of the village we must consider its social life, which is in many ways inseparably connected with its religion. Early in the nineteenth century, as we have seen, the Parson was indifferent to the needs of the labourer, and threw in his lot with the Squire and the larger farmers; the lingering remnants of seventeenth century puritanism, too, had had a blighting effect upon the amusements of the villagers. Meantime in the towns there grew up a school of philanthropists largely recruited from the Quakers, Huguenots and Unitarians, with some of the Broad church clergy. The aim of this group was to ameliorate the lot of the urban worker, who was suffering most acutely from the dislocation caused by the Industrial Revolution. Among their number was the Rev. F. D. Maurice, the son of a Unitarian minister, but himself a clergyman of the Church of England. His preaching and writings had a marked influence on Charles Kingsley, a clergyman of the Beaker type, but with a great admiration of all that was best in the Nordic character; he was essentially a country man, a gentleman and a sportsman. Charles Kingsley it was who first saw and regretted the sad plight into which the English villages had sunk, and he strove hard to stem the tide.

About the same time a group of Dons at Oriel College, Oxford, impressed by the romantic movement and the revolt against an effete imitation of classical thought, endeavoured to revive the ideals of the Mediæval Church. Thus, under the leadership of Pusey, Newman and many more, arose what is known as the Oxford Movement.

The more earnest of the younger clerics, shocked by the indifference which had overtaken the clergy of the English Church during the past century, embraced the new movement with fervour, and carried its teachings, not only to the slums of the big towns, but frequently to remote country villages. In the slums they were first met by a shower of cabbage stalks and then with unexpected success, but in the country villages the labourers received these new views with suspicion, while the squire and the larger farmers, who above all things disliked change, were frankly hostile. In most cases there was no possibility of converting these powerful opponents, but sympathetic attention to the needs of the labourer might at least disarm their suspicion, and so the young high-church clergy turned to the teachings of Maurice and Kingsley.

They started night schools and classes, organised concerts and penny-readings, introduced surpliced choirs, thereby abolishing the old gallery choir with its accompanying orchestra; they founded guilds of bell-ringers, and instituted Choral Festivals and Choral Harvest Thanksgivings. Later on they took up the Temperance Movement with fervour, and Temperance Meetings took the place of penny-readings; in these and many other ways they endeavoured to infuse a new social life into the village.

At first they were persecuted, sometimes imprisoned, and during these years their work prospered and their influence among the labourers increased. Then one by one some of the squires became converted to the new teaching, some of their number reached the episcopal bench, their views were tolerated and later became fashionable. Their sympathetic attention to the peasants' wants became less marked, their interest became more focussed on coloured stoles and "frontals," and the movement, which had at first shown some signs of taking root, withered and died. In the meantime they had restored most of the Village Churches, with more

zeal than discretion it must be admitted, often substituting pitch-pine benches for carved oak pews, but they can claim to have introduced some idea of beauty into the villages, though it is doubtful how far their efforts in this direction were really appreciated by their parishioners.

Thus with the enclosure of the Common Fields and Waste the community life of the village came to an end. Village society became divided into two camps, often two hostile camps; the squire and the farmers in the one, and often the parson too, while in the other were the farm labourers and perhaps a few small holders. Thus there were the Haves and Have-nots, with no bond of association between them but an ever widening gap; this gap yawned still wider as the parish ceased to count as a civil unit.

The labourer's life centred round the village pub, his recreations were the Hiring Fair at the market town, and the Village Feasts, still held upon the Green, where a green survived, or in the field behind the pub, where it did not; for to such a pass had fallen what had once been the anniversary celebration of the dedication of the Parish Church. Both were tending to become less reputable and were shunned by the more "respectable" members of village society.

The high church clergy endeavoured to change all this. They made no attempt to restore to the Pub, or to the Feast, their old respectable status, they did not try to improve the old mixed choir that had sung for generations, mostly out of tune it must be admitted, from the west-end gallery of the church, to the accompaniment of a fiddle and Bass Viol whose musical powers were limited. They discouraged attendance at the Pub, but rarely provided a village club; they discouraged too, the Village Feast, till it gradually disappeared; they abolished the mixed choir and its accompanying orchestra, together with the gallery in which it had sat, and instituted in its place a surpliced choir of boys, and more

“respectable” men thus introducing into the village church a custom belonging more properly to cathedrals and monastic churches. They endeavoured to centre the social life of the village around the church festivities, Harvest Thanksgivings and Choral Festivals, or concerts got up in aid of the S.P.G. In some villages they were in a measure successful, and in many cases they failed dismally; in no case was the work taken up by the villagers, but it died with the founder, for it was his entertainment, not theirs.

There is little of such community life left in the villages now. The Parish Councils were designed to improve matters, and in some villages which are not wholly agricultural they have done something; but in truly rural parishes they are at present valueless. Small Holdings Acts were passed in 1907 and 1908. They were designed to provide a class to fill the gap, but in this they have been only partially successful; the number of such holdings provided by the County Councils has been comparatively few, and those placed in colonies in selected villages, while the small holder is as a rule so busy making money, and he needs to be if he is to pay the interest on the buildings and fencing put up for him, that he has little leisure for social amenities. The ordinary farm labourer takes little interest in these attempts to improve village life; he has lost all ambition, and in only too many cases he is, if not actually feeble-minded, at least subnormal.

As in former centuries, the squires continued to rebuild their houses in a more spacious style and with all the modern improvements which nineteenth century science had suggested. Later in the century a number of small country houses appeared, to meet the needs of retired professional men and Civil Servants, and during the last quarter of the century it was becoming more and more the custom for professional and business men, including many of the more prosperous traders, to live some miles from their work amid rural surroundings. While

this was at first more marked around our larger cities, before the close of the century, it became true to some extent even of our smaller market towns. The invention of the safety bicycle in the late eighties, and still more its sudden adoption by all classes of the people in 1895, made this custom more wide-spread, and enabled more humble town-dwellers to migrate to the villages. These movements were accentuated by the advent of the motor car early in the twentieth century, which considerably added to the number of country dwellers.

During the prosperous days of agriculture in the middle of the nineteenth century a very large number of farm-houses were re-built, and extensive buildings attached to them; this movement began about 1840, and was nearly completed by 1870. Since then little has been done in this direction, and during the lean years at the close of the nineteenth century most farmers found themselves over-housed.

Little was done to improve the cottages during this time. When the thatch caught fire and the house was destroyed, it was seldom replaced, unless it had been heavily insured. Rents had not kept pace with the cost of building, and so cottage property was not considered a good investment, and in some parishes there was a deliberate policy to destroy small houses, so as to reduce the liability for poor rates; the inducement to do this, however, came to an end with the passing of the Poor Law Act of 1836, which removed the onus of keeping the poor from the Parish to the Union. Throughout this period, the cottages, often built in the sixteenth century, grew steadily worse and worse, until many were past repair and had become unfit for human habitation.

There were some bright spots in this otherwise gloomy picture. Here and there was to be found an estate which prided itself upon its model cottages, and thus became a striking contrast to its neighbours. Sometimes such model villages were the result of genuine altruistic feeling, of a desire to be "good to the poor";

often, I fear, it was merely the wish to possess and live in well-ordered, tidy or beautiful surroundings, and the rebuilding of the cottages was merely a part of a scheme of extensive landscape gardening.

The Housing of the Working Classes Act, 1890, threw the responsibility of seeing to the healthy condition of cottages upon the Boards of Guardians, as the Rural Sanitary Authority, but as the members of these Boards were usually the owners of the houses in question, little was done at first. Certain building regulations were drawn up governing the erection of new houses, but as no new cottages were being built this had little effect. Under the Local Government Act, 1894, the Boards of Guardians were placed upon a more democratic basis, and the Justices of the Peace were no longer *ex-officio* members. The rural members of these Boards formed the Rural District Council, which took over all the duties of the Rural Sanitary Authority. Still little was done, for no one felt inclined to improve a class of property which did not pay. The squires were so determined to keep wages low and to have a monopoly of the cottages in their villages that they were averse to raising cottage rents, and so the uneconomic rent persisted.

The beginning of the twentieth century saw a slight rise in the rural population; whether this was due to a small increase in the price of corn or to the influx of visitors caused by the bicycle and the motor-car is still uncertain, but the increase noticed in 1901 was more marked in 1911. The many acts passed after 1894 for the betterment of rural conditions, while the effect was not very rapid or marked, were probably laying a foundation for a better state of things, and towards 1910 a demand not only for better but for more cottages was being felt in some districts. In some cases the Rural District Councils met this demand by erecting a few houses, but, owing to the existence of the uneconomic rent, it was found difficult to make them pay, and the people objected to the loss being made good out of the

rates. Thus by 1914 very little had been done to improve the quality or quantity of the rural cottages.

At the close of the War it was found that contrary to expectation, the population had considerably increased, and that there was a great shortage of houses; this was as true in the country as it was in the towns. The lack of building materials and the increased wages in the building trades made house building cost three or four times what it had done in 1914, and this, added to the increased interest required for loans, made it necessary to raise rents enormously if any new houses were to pay their way. As in many villages the rents of cottages were less than a quarter of what would have been an economic rent in 1914, the problem before the local housing committees has not been an easy one. Comparatively few rural housing schemes have done more than make a beginning as these pages are being written, so it is premature to express any opinion on the effect they will have upon village life.

The advent into many villages of families from outside, usually of the professional or business classes, which we have seen was beginning during the close of the nineteenth century, has had some effect on the social life of the areas into which they have come. Accustomed to the more sociable life of towns, and having ample leisure, they frequently set about organising amusements in the villages in which they have settled. Often these endeavours have met the fate of those made by the nineteenth century clergy, but in some cases, warned by the failure of their predecessors, such reformers have encouraged the villagers to take an ever-increasing hand in the management, until in some cases they have taken complete command.

On the whole the period from 1890 to 1914 is one exhibiting many serious attempts to improve the condition of villages and their humbler occupants. Such attempts as a rule showed little success at the time but it may be that before long we shall reap the benefit of the

patient work carried on in many regions during this interval.

During the war all the young men of the villages, and many of those approaching middle life, passed their time amidst thousands of their fellows. The close association with others of their kind in the trenches or the Y.M.C.A. huts has left a lasting impression on most of them, and in the Village Clubs which are being started all over the country we may see the germ of a new sociability and of the revival of the community spirit.

The minimum wage for agricultural labourers, though only a temporary measure, has made it worth while for the farmer to select the best men instead of the cheapest, and the proportion of feeble-minded inhabitants in the villages seems to be diminishing. The Workers' Union, and the National Union of Agricultural Workers, which include all farm labourers, bring many of the members together from time to time to transact the Union's affairs, and are teaching them how to manage public business, and encouraging them to take their part in it.

Lastly, we have the Women's Institutes, which are advancing more rapidly than the men's societies. At present, in many places, the energetic wife of the squire or parson is taking too conspicuous a part, but signs are not lacking that the women themselves are determined to manage their affairs in their own way; it is, perhaps, from this direction, even more than from the others, that a fresh community spirit will arise.

The nineteenth century witnessed the lowest state of degradation that the village community in this country has passed through, but between 1890 and 1900 the tide seems to have turned. Though few changes were visible by 1914, the results of the period of the war seem to have been to arouse among the people, men and women alike, a greater sense of the need for association; the effects of this upon village life are becoming daily more marked, and perhaps, before long, we may see the birth of a new community in the English Village.

CHAPTER XVII

THE FUTURE

WE have now traced the evolution of the English village from its origins in the long distant past to its decay and dissolution in our own time. We have seen it free in the neolithic age among the mountains of central Europe, we have watched its enslavement by wave after wave of fair Nordics emanating from the broad steppe-lands of south Russia and Turkestan, and we have traced the steps by which the individuals of which it was composed gradually attained their freedom, while the community at the same time began to disintegrate and decay. Finally we have witnessed its dissolution during the nineteenth century and the abortive attempts at its revival made during the last twenty-five years.

We must now, in the light of this long past, consider its future prospects. We are in this, as in many things, at the parting of the ways. The great European War has brought to a close a great epoch of time, one which began, perhaps, with the inrush of Teutonic hordes upon the decaying Roman Empire, or perhaps a still longer epoch, which started with the westward march of the steppe-folk from beyond the Dnieper at the dawn of the metal age, more than four thousand years ago. What is to be the future of the English Village? We cannot bring to life an organism which has died a natural death, it is scarcely worth while to re-create it on its old model. We have to consider first of all do we desire a community at all.

Now man, wherever we find him to-day, is a gregarious animal, and the same seems ever to have been true of him in the past, as far as we can judge from the evidence

of history and archæology. He has never, save in exceptional instances and under the influence of strong religious motives, been a solitary species. Family life is normal to him ; the family usually clings together as do the group of families which comprise the clan. Only in the higher

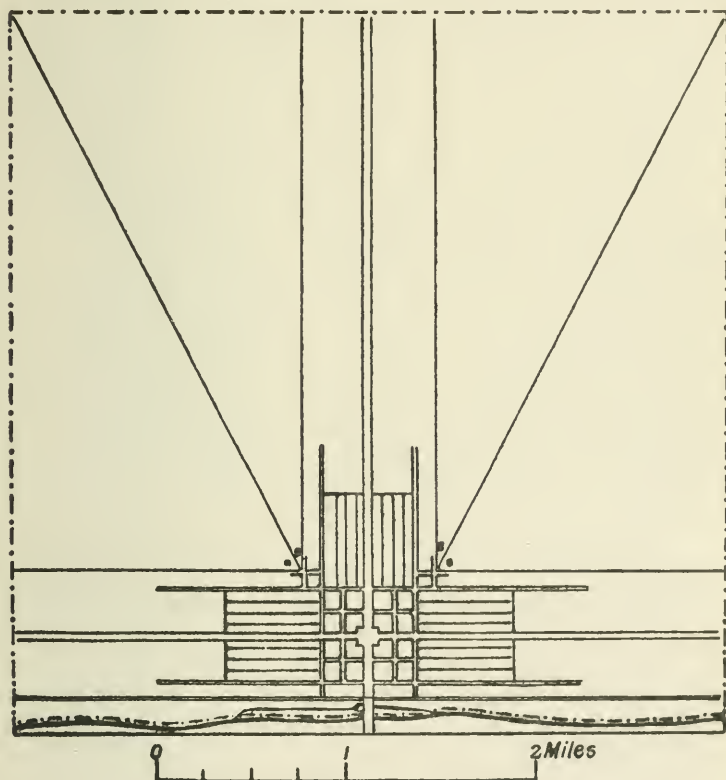


FIGURE XIII

DIAGRAM OF AN IDEAL TOWNSHIP

civilisations do we find the clan disintegrate and the family tend to separate on attaining maturity, and this only because its members can readily be absorbed by other groups.

The tendency of development has been from small groups to larger. Just as the family has become, even in the simplest societies, merged in the clan, often losing its cohesion thereby, so clans have coalesced into nations, and nations into states or confederacies. In each case of coalescence the bonds of the smaller unit have tended to weaken. The original village community held together because it was isolated from all others, small states for a like reason have a stronger national consciousness than the constituents of great confederacies, and the same is true of villages and small towns as compared with great cities like London. The greater the conglomeration, be it city or empire, the less social consciousness and solidarity have the component parts.

Thus the tendency of villages in an imperial nation like England is to lose their internal cohesion, and this is truer the nearer we approach London, the heart of the Empire. But we have to consider whether this lack of a community or of a community spirit is healthy and for the good of the inhabitants, and whether it is a necessary concomitant of imperial expansion.

How dependent upon each other are the inhabitants and families of a village, town or district is perhaps brought home to us most in times of difficulty, during a war, during a shortage of food, or of other necessities of life, during a coal strike or a railway strike. Then the common trouble makes neighbours, at other times unneighbourly, combine together to overcome difficulties and minimise inconveniences. Would it not be an advantage to the inhabitants of such areas to combine more in normal times for the common good of all? That unity is strength has been recognised by man from the earliest times, for lack of unity has rapidly brought about the downfall of those, whether individuals or states, who ignored this principle. The tendency of recent years has been towards solidarity among members of the same class, or those following the same occupation, rather

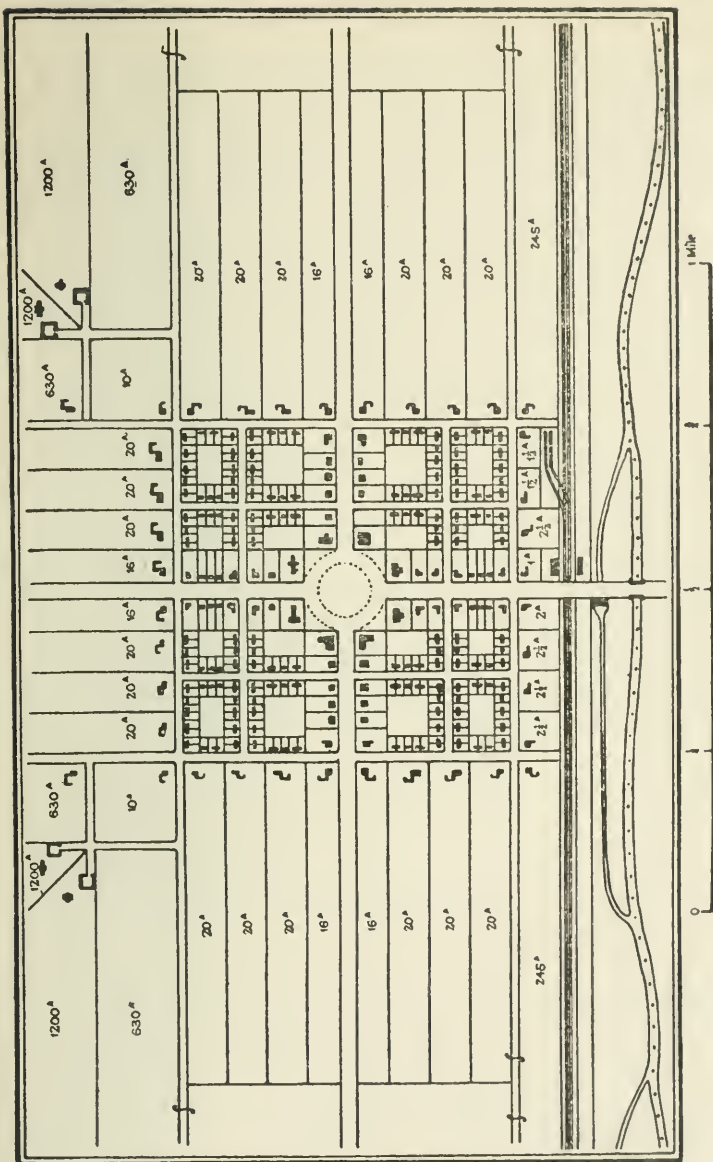


FIGURE XIV
DIAGRAM OF AN IDEAL VILLAGE

than among those dwelling in the same region. Is it not possible to combine both ?

In Japan, in spite of the growth of urban population and the industrialism of the last half century, the small unit of neighbours, originally the village community, is still preserved, even in the great cities. Groups of five adjoining houses form a unit known as a *kumi*, and the members of this unit have certain mutual responsibilities.¹

These units, which somewhat resemble the tithing of Saxon days, are combined into larger units and so on until one reaches what correspond to wards and boroughs. Thus, in spite of the existence of large aggregates of population, the small unit with mutual responsibilities still survives.

In China, too, a somewhat similar arrangement holds good, at any rate in the rural areas.² In spite of the fact that China has long been an extensive empire, the village community has not lost its existence, nor has the organisation of the people according to occupation, which is of old standing, destroyed its vigour. We see, therefore, that large empires with large cities, and with populations organised for combination on an occupational basis, may still preserve intact the idea of a village community. It may be worth while before closing this work to consider what the villages of England should be like in the new future which we hope is dawning upon the country. It must be remembered, however, that there are different types of villages: fishing villages, mining villages, industrial villages and suburban villages, each needing to develop on their own lines. Our problem is concerned with agricultural villages, the hardest problem to solve, and even these must vary according as their main occupation is corn growing, dairying or stock-raising. A Minister of Transport has recently suggested that perhaps in time factories may be started in every village, thus bringing the industrial worker

¹ Simmons and Wigmore (1891), 95.

² Johnstone (1910) 127-154.

into a healthier environment, and into closer touch with the agricultural labourer, to the advantage of both.¹ The improved methods of transport which he foreshadowed, together with the suggested distribution of electric power throughout the country, will make such a change possible, but even should these castles in the air materialise, it is probable that there will still remain in this country a large number of purely agricultural villages.

In contrast to this idea of bringing the town workers to the villages is the scheme advanced by the National Garden Cities Committee.² This assumes that everyone desires to live in a town, and that no one would inhabit a village unless compelled from necessity to do so. This Committee propose the foundation of innumerable garden cities, each containing about 30,000 inhabitants, placed at intervals of twelve to fifteen miles all over the country. It is perhaps rash to assume that all men, even all industrial workers, would prefer urban to rural conditions, even if the urban areas were purged of most of what is distasteful and unwholesome. The Nordic strain, which as we have seen, is still dominant among our people, has not yet altogether lost its taste for open spaces and wide expanses, and there are still left many who would prefer to be members of a small community, in which they might count for something, rather than be absorbed in a larger even if more perfect organism in which they would, as it were, exchange their name for a number.

Now our first concern must be to consider the size of our agricultural villages, that is to say the population which they should contain if they are to meet the social requirements of the present time, and with this is intimately bound up another question, the extent or acreage of the land cultivated by each village community. The original community, as we meet with it in Saxon times,

¹ Geddes (1919), 6.

² New Townsman (1918); Purdom (1913).

seems normally to have consisted of ten or twelve households, which, reckoning on an average five to the household, would mean a population of fifty to sixty. It is true that even in those days there was probably no uniformity. Apart from certain large villages, usually on land held by the Crown, and which were rapidly acquiring the character of market towns, there were probably some villages with larger populations than this, the result often of the coalescence of two neighbouring townships. On the other hand, there were many, especially in the Midlands and western counties, probably of the forest type, which seem to have been much smaller.

Judging from the Domesday survey the population of the typical village had somewhat increased by the close of the eleventh century, though as yet no accurate data have been worked out on this subject. But we have seen that the population increased rapidly in the twelfth century, and that fresh lands were brought into cultivation, so that we may well imagine that the population of the Mediæval village was little if any less than two hundred. To-day, as far as I have been able to estimate it in the townships of Wessex, the population of each township, which is unaffected by external and non-agricultural factors, is about two hundred; some, it is true, have risen to three hundred, but usually at the expense of a neighbour, while there are not a few which contain only one hundred or less. The population, then, of our townships is not unlike that which obtained in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, though owing to the coalescence of more than one township into the civil parish, which is the census area in most parts of rural England, these figures are not obvious from the census returns.

Now as the civilisation of any people increases, so is there an increased demand for social intercourse, and for a number of amenities and institutions, recreative and educational, which cannot be provided with efficiency and economy in an area where the population is too small or

too scattered. We find symptoms of these needs appearing at different times in many lands. As Hellenic civilisation advanced we find that it was customary for two or three villages to coalesce to form the germ of a city. This synecism (συννοικισμός) led to the foundation of Athens and Sparta and many another Greek city. This custom of synecism was not peculiar to Greek lands, for we find it too on Italian soil; Rome itself arose from the coalescence of two or more villages, Latin and Sabine. Nor is the custom unknown in this country, for it has been argued with much learning that the town of Cambridge arose from the coalescence of two frontier villages, one Mercian, the other East Anglian, which had for a time faced one another from either bank of the Granta.¹

It is a well known fact that during the nineteenth century, and especially during its latter half, the young men were leaving the villages to settle in the towns. During the first half of the century this exodus was due largely to the general increase in our population and to the demand for industrial workers; the villages were only exporting their surplus men like their surplus corn. But during the latter half this was not altogether so, for the population of the country was not increasing so rapidly, yet this exodus continued to an increasing extent, and the population of the agricultural villages began rapidly to decrease. This decline lasted to the end of the century, but about 1900 the tide began to turn, the 1901 census shows a halt in this process and sometimes a slight advance, which is seen to be more marked in that of 1911. The cause of this change has been attributed by Professor Roxby to the rise in the price of grain, and this may be one of the factors.² The introduction of the motor-car, which enabled many of the richer of our town dwellers to live further from their work, was no doubt another factor, but I cannot help thinking, as the result of my own observations, that an important factor was the growing

¹ Gray (1908).

² Roxby (1912).

dislike of town conditions by the country-bred youths, and the realisation that higher wages did not always compensate for higher rent and cost of living, accompanied by the lack of many of the amenities to which they had been accustomed.¹

Still, in spite of this partial halt, the exodus continued until 1914, when the great exodus to the field of battle took place. Doubtless the attraction of higher wages and greater possibilities for advancement accounted for much of this, but not for all. The bad housing conditions in many rural areas was also an important factor, but the housing conditions in urban areas were often worse. Weighing all the evidence, I am inclined to believe that the most potent factor was the dullness of the country, and the desire for a fuller life, not, it is true, consciously expressed, but subconsciously felt. As hours of labour are shortened and leisure is increased, as the minds of the young are developed by a truer education, so does this demand for society, for recreation and for educational facilities increase. It has not been found possible so far adequately to provide for these needs in truly rural parishes, and so the most promising youths seek their occupations in more crowded and less healthy regions where they can satisfy these cravings.

Our ideal villages, then, must contain a population sufficiently large to enable them to supply some of these needs, and to command transport facilities to enable their inhabitants quickly and cheaply to reach some larger centre where they can find institutions of a more advanced and complex order. I can discover no accurate data on which to base an estimate for the minimum population of our ideal village, but from the careful study of several large villages of mixed agricultural and industrial population I am inclined to believe that all necessary requirements could be provided in a village containing from one thousand to one thousand two hundred people, especially if such village were connected by a fairly

¹ Peake (1917 and 1918).

constant train, tram or motor-bus service with an urban centre.

If, then, we take as our basis that a rural village should contain at least one thousand people, we must consider what extent of land its inhabitants must cultivate, for the labourer must not be too far from his work. As we have seen, there are usually about two hundred people in an ordinary agricultural township of the valley type; all or nearly all of these obtain their living directly or indirectly from the land. They consist mainly of farmers, small-holders and agricultural labourers, with occasionally a sprinkling of hay-tiers, hedgers and ditchers, thatchers, well-sinkers and the like. There may also be a squire and a parson, whose households will be larger than the average, a miller, blacksmith, wheelwright, station-master, policeman, schoolmaster, and the proprietors of the public-house and village shop. It is rare that all these people are to be found in one township, and if such be the case the population will usually exceed two hundred; on the other hand, it is unusual to find none of them. Thus we may take it that an average valley township will contain about two hundred people, directly or indirectly engaged in the cultivation of the land.

Now the valley township of Wessex, and I believe the same is true of many regions in the south and east of England, is a strip of land about three quarters of a mile wide and from four to five miles long; and this, as we have seen, provides work for about two hundred people. If, then, we were to perform a synecism, and combine five of these strips, we should have an area, roughly a square, with sides ranging as a rule from four to five miles long, and finding work for a population of one thousand, the desired minimum.

If, too, our new villages were placed as near as possible to the centres of these areas, and the farms and farm buildings arranged on the edge of the village, the labourers would all be near their horses and cattle, and no

one would be more than three miles from the most distant point at which he would be required to work; as it would usually be possible for the labourers to ride in waggons and on tractors to the distant fields for ploughing and harvesting, this would be no great inconvenience. In any case the distance is no greater than is frequently traversed by labourers as it is, and the work would only occasionally be so far from home.

Now it is the experience of most rural Housing Committees that country cottages require a good garden, for the labourer prefers to have his garden at his door, where his wife can attend to small details during her leisure moments, rather than have to walk some distance to an allotment, situated in a field among a number of others, some of which may not be as well cultivated as his own. Nevertheless some labourers are keener gardeners than others, and others again have large families to cater for. It has usually been found convenient to place six cottages to the acre, or sometimes to allot rather more than an acre to that number of houses, fully realising that perhaps a few of the tenants may require further garden space. It must also be remembered that some may need additional space for a small poultry run. This extra amount of land for additional garden and poultry run can often be obtained by retaining an acre or two at the centre of each block, that is of each area surrounded by roads, for the use of the surrounding tenants; thus those requiring additional land could usually obtain it close to, if not adjoining their garden. This would mean that in each block there would be about five cottages to the acre.

But besides gardens and allotments we must allow space for roads, and not only for these but for the village green and other open spaces, for uninhabited buildings such as churches, schools, village hall and the like. Also our village will contain some larger houses with larger gardens, some perhaps with a paddock for a pony. So that in the area allotted to the village proper we cannot

place more than three houses or fifteen people on each acre.

If we imagine our village as square, with each side measuring half a mile and so containing an area of one quarter of a square mile, we should have 160 acres within which to erect our houses. According to our calculation we should within this space be able to erect 480 houses, each with a good garden and some land to spare, and thus house a population of 2,400. Thus it is easy to house, not only our thousand people, but more than twice the number, within an area measuring half a mile each way, so that no individual is more than ten minutes walk from any other, and the majority within five minutes' walk of the centre, where all the public buildings would be situated. The small holders, who must be near their land, will have their houses in the outer ring, where will be the larger houses which require more extensive grounds, while the larger farm houses and their buildings will be placed at the corners, outside though immediately adjoining the village proper. (See Figures XIII and XIV, pages 221 and 223).

But it may be argued that these calculations may be vitiated if improved machinery, such as tractors, come into general use and the number of farm labourers needed is proportionately diminished. It is true that such possibilities must be taken into consideration, but to balance it we may expect an increase in the number of small holders. In any case this aspect of the case will not materially affect us. A population of one thousand people needs a number of people not directly concerned with agriculture, who would find it profitable to establish themselves in centres of that size. There would be several shops, probably a bank, possibly a doctor and a lawyer, besides representatives of such trades as saddler and boot-maker. There would almost certainly be a builder, probably more than one, and that will mean a due complement of bricklayers, carpenters and others employed in that trade. Besides that, in any village of this size, there will be a demand for houses from a miscellaneous

group of people, mostly retired from active work, maiden ladies, daughters and widows of farmers, who feel the isolation of the existing small villages, but often prefer a large village, where rural conditions prevail, to the urban conditions of the smallest market town.

In such a village, and a number of such exist throughout the land, mostly survivals of market towns of Saxon date, it would be possible to lead a life full of social activities. The elementary schools would be large enough to be competently run, and there would be a handicraft centre and continuation school; the village club could be the rallying point of social life. A lending library, a branch of that in the nearest town, could be open once or twice a week, when books could be ordered for the next week. There would probably be a doctor, certainly a village nurse, perhaps living in a house where one or two patients could be nursed, the germ of a cottage hospital, and where, perhaps, a dentist could attend at stated intervals. Perhaps, too, there could be a picture palace, in which case the village would be provided with what to many of its inhabitants is its most pressing need. All the everyday requirements of health, education and recreation, needed by most of the inhabitants would be found within the village itself, while the population would be sufficient to command reasonable transport facilities to the neighbouring town, where they could satisfy their rarer needs. There they would find the hospital and medical specialists, the secondary schools, central library and museum, concerts and theatres, professional men and the larger shops. Two or three chains of such villages around each urban centre would cover the country, and provide homes for all the tillers of the soil, while it might house under healthy conditions a large part of those whose occupations lie in other directions. There would be no sense of isolation, no feeling of being in a backwater, for each community would be self-sufficing for its smaller needs, and for those of a more special order it would form part of that larger

community, numbering many thousands, which focusses upon the urban centre.

If the village is to provide a full life for its inhabitants it will also be necessary that it should contain every variety of individual that is possible within so small a compass. Farm labourers need to mix with artisans and skilled workers of all kinds, and a graded series of small holders is necessary to link them with the large farmers ; a graded series of shop-keepers might also help towards this end. On the other hand we need the leavening of the professional classes, the doctor, the solicitor and the bank manager, and perhaps some professional or business men with offices in the neighbouring town, or some retired men from some of our great centres of industry. All these will be able, in one way or another, to contribute to the social and intellectual life of the village.

Of the possible introduction of factories, dependent upon electric power, I have already written, and if such could be general many of our difficulties would vanish. But although for the last century or more we have been largely dependent on machine-made goods, and in some respects this is likely to increase rather than diminish in the future, there is in some quarters a steady and growing demand for hand-made articles and materials, especially among those who value quality and durability in preference to mere cheapness. Such handicrafts have never quite become extinct in the country, and there are signs that in some directions they are on the increase. These crafts, which are really arts as well, can be pursued better in villages than among the sordid conditions of our towns, and I look to see colonies of craftsmen, cloth-weavers, potters and cabinet makers, settled in some, at least, of our ideal villages. These craftsmen might well lend a hand to the farmer or small holder in hay-time and harvest, while in the long winter evenings the farm labourer and his family might practice some minor branch of the craft.

But above all it is important that all the members of our village should realise that they are members of one and the same community. The agriculturist and the craftsman, the artizan and the professional man, would meet on common ground at the village club, their young people would share the recreation grounds, and the artificial barriers of caste would by degrees be broken down. Even in our present villages, small and imperfect as they are, there are no such clear-cut barriers against intercourse between members of different classes as exist even in the smallest of towns. In the ideal village it should be possible for everyone to know everyone else, not only by sight but to speak to; not that every old gentleman could be expected to recognise every baby at a glance, but that all the men would know one another and all the women likewise, while all the young people and all the children, of whatever class, would have been to some extent brought up together.

Hitherto I have been describing a village formed on an individualistic basis, but individualism is best modified by some system of co-operation, else the village is but an aggregate of isolated individuals, and the community spirit will be wholly absent. The peasants, whether large farmers or small holders or even holders of allotments, might well combine into an association for the purchase of their seeds, tools and machinery, food-stuffs and manures; also to market their produce, whether it be corn, hay or milk, or more especially if it be poultry, butter, eggs and fruit. The gardeners might again form a combination for a like purpose, or perhaps this organisation might be a branch of the larger agricultural association. The craftsmen might also similarly combine, in fact, there might be two or three such combinations in a single village, each as it were a separate trade guild. Representatives from each Guild might form a Village Council, to superintend the interests common to all, such as matters pertaining to health, communications, education, recreation and so on, in fact all the amenities of

life. The professional element in the village population would be invaluable in organising such schemes, and their legal, financial and other technical advice would be of the greatest value. Thus from combinations arising out of the occupational needs of the population would grow an organisation concerned mainly with other aspects of life, just as the corporative bodies of our great cities arose in the Middle Ages out of a combination of Trade Guilds.

Such, in brief outline, is the ideal village of the future as I see it, or rather dream it. A village based on individualism strongly tempered with the co-operative principle. Such villages should, of course, not be of all one pattern, for apart from geographical conditions which make variety a necessity, we need different models to suit different racial types, and that *genius loci*, which is a product of racial inheritance, geographical conditions and past history. There may even be room in this country for experiments on a collectivist basis, though that seems unlikely. Provided that there be ample variation in detail, experience will show what types are transient and which are calculated to survive, which will suit the conditions of one region and which will prosper better in another. The details must be worked out afresh in each case, here we have been concerned only with the fundamental principles which are common to all alike.

But each village must grow up on a well-considered plan, with ample opportunities for expansion within certain limits. The preparation of this will be the duty of the new race of Town planners which these times of transition have produced, or rather of a still newer generation of village planners or perhaps regional planners which the future must bring forth. The variety of possible types upon which the villages can be modelled is limitless, but village planning differs from town planning in this, there is no room for geometrical design and straight lines must be reduced to a minimum, else

we introduce too urban an element into our rural surroundings.

Now is the time to act. Our local authorities are busy with the erection of thousands of cottages, 100,000 in rural England alone, and when one thinks of the condition of most of those still existing, we realise that this number will have to be multiplied by five at least during the course of the next few years. Now is the time, while all our country cottages are being replaced, to re-plan our villages upon some well-considered model. Let us not "muddle through" this as we have done through so many important crises of our past history, lest we stereotype a system which has outworn its usefulness, and fail to seize the opportunity which is now offered to us to construct villages capable of sustaining a community life in keeping with modern conditions.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

THE FOLLOWING ABBREVIATIONS HAVE BEEN USED

A.	.. l'Anthropologie.
A.M.J.	.. American Museums Journal.
Arch.	.. Archæologia.
Arch. Camb.	.. Archæologia Cambrensis.
Arch. Journ.	.. Archæological Journal.
Arch. Oxon	.. Archæologia Oxoniensis.
Arch. Rev.	.. Archæological Review.
A.p.l'A.e l'E.	.. Archivo per l'Antropologia e l'Etnologia.
A-S.C.	.. Anglo-Saxon Chronicle.
B.P.I.B.	.. Bulletin of the Plant Industrial Bureau, U.S. Dept. of Agriculture
B.S.A.P.	.. Bulletin de la Societé d'anthropologie de Paris.
C.A.S.	.. Cambridge Antiquarian Society.
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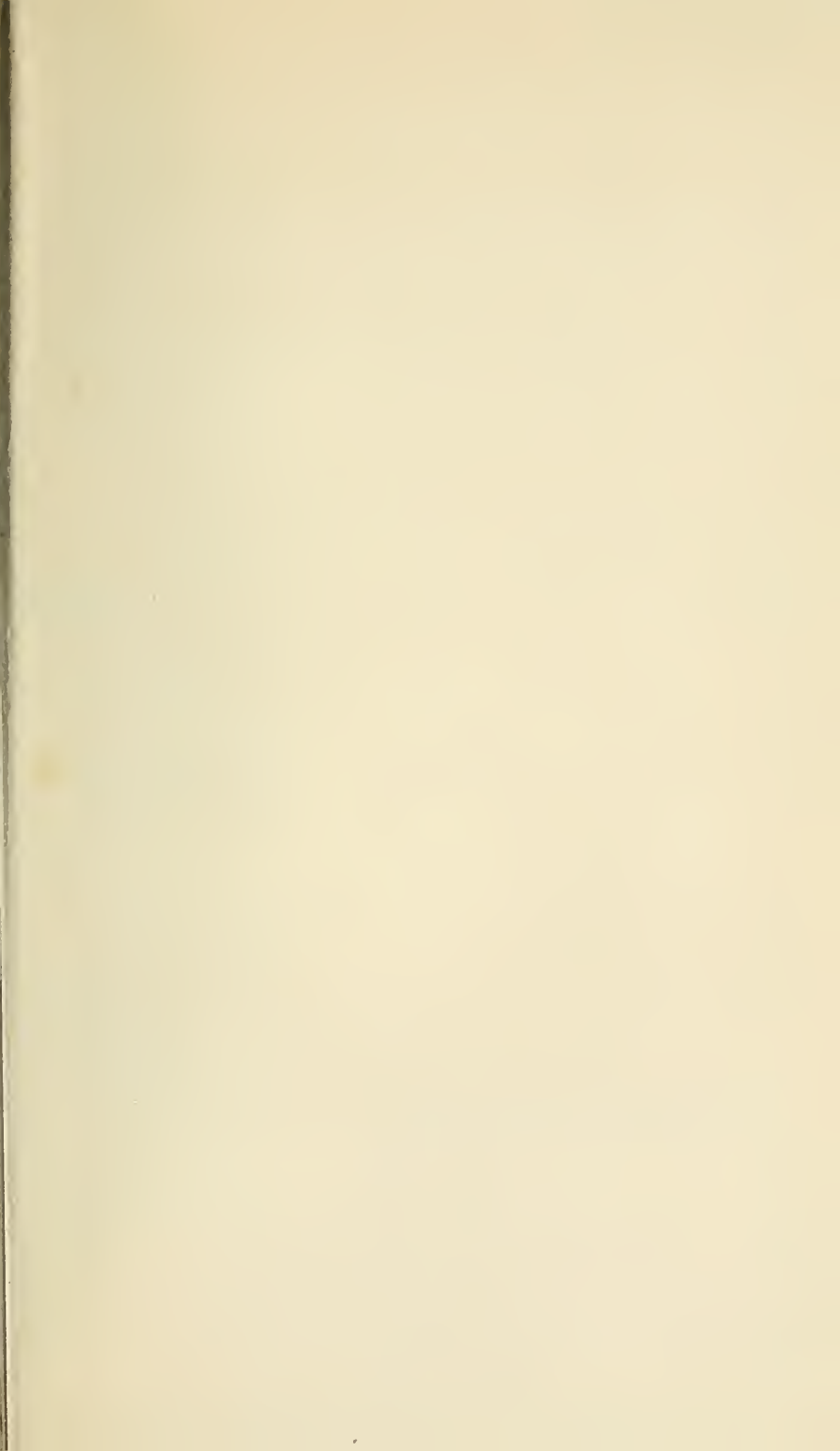
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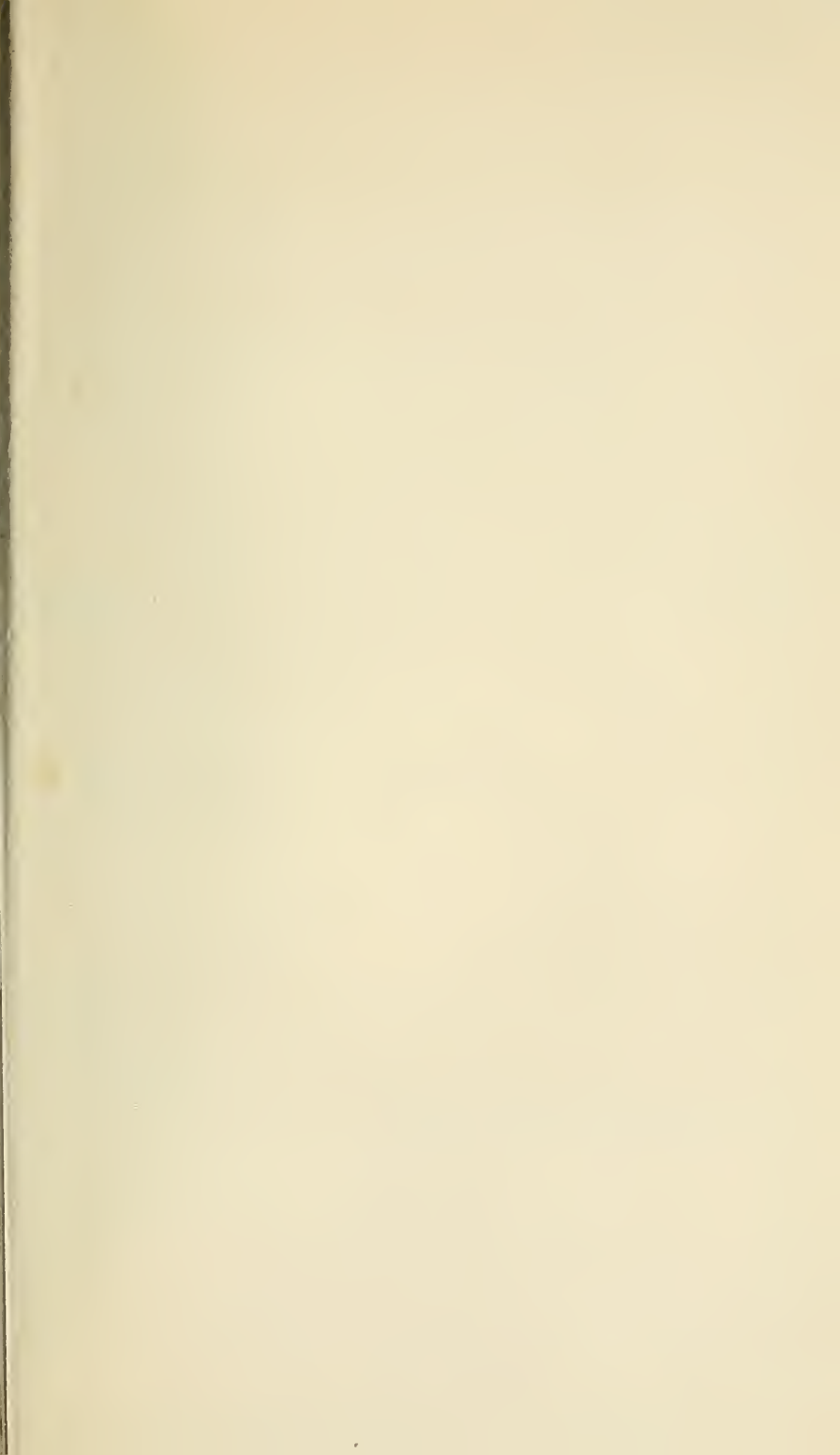
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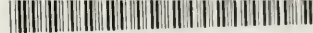




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